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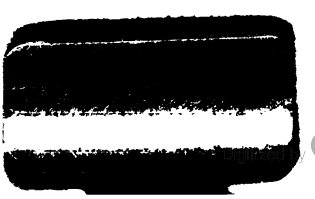

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THE

# CABINET.

VOL. I.

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THE

# CABINET;

A

## SERIES OF ESSAYS

## MORAL AND LITERARY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

Most of the following Papers were written several years ago, and were designed by the Author for periodical circulation in Edinburgh. The causes which prevented that course from being followed, are wholly uninteresting to the Public. And the circumstance is only mentioned, to account for any anachronisms which may have crept in, from a few additions of a later date.



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# THE CABINET.

## I. THE AUTHOR AND HIS CABINET.

Condo et compono quæ mox depromere possim.
Hor.

They who have applied themselves to the instruction of their fellow-citizens, often complain of the ill returns which they meet with from the objects of their care. In settling the balance of obligation indeed, in such cases, there is some difference of opinion among the parties. The Teacher, knowing how much his labours have cost him, is apt to rate their worth accordingly, and to measure by the same rule the gratitude due from his disciples: while they, on the other hand, are neither much disposed to receive admonition, nor to admit his pretensions to be its organ; and if they vouchsafe him any notice at all, only do so, to contrast his merits with those of the most eminent who have gone before him.

There is no branch of the preceptorial office more exposed to this trying scrutiny, than that which professes to instruct by short periodical Essays. The subjects treated are of that common kind, which every



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one thinks himself as able to judge of as his teacher; and in no department of letters, at least in our language, are greater rivals to be dreaded. The powers of an Addison, a Chesterfield, a Johnson, a Mackenzie, are brought in array against the new candidate; and if he shrink under this fearful test, he is pronounced unworthy.

More lately, our polite and lively neighbours on the Continent have also entered into the competition. It might have been thought, indeed, that with a literature so much turned to the exhibition of life and manners, and a language so happily suited to such topics, the French should have been rather our instructors than disciples in this branch of moral teaching. But so far as I know, the *Pour et Contre* of the Abbé Prevost, published in the year 1733, is the first work of this kind possessed by that nation. Within these few years another has appeared from the pen of M. Jouy, *L'Hermite de la Chaussée d'Antin*;—with its continuations under other names;—and by its good sense, elegance, and humour, has added another to the discouragements of a new adventurer.*

All which things being duly weighed, the conclusion, I fear, is, that I should have placed a padlock on my ink-horn, and allowed the world to roll on in its course, ignorant of my labours. "Let me die," as

* This introductory paper was written before the works of Mr Washington Irvine (who may, without great violence, be pressed into the ranks of periodical Essayists) had shewn to the people of England that a stranger could paint their manners, and write their language, better than most of themselves.

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Horace says—"if it were not a wise resolution—But I cannot sleep." I must betake myself to the excuse of frail humanity, and allow that inclination refuted logic; for while Reason admitted all the premises, Self-love slipt in a small exception, before I could round my syllogism. Besides, my studies may have a merit which could not be claimed by Horace, that of giving repose to their readers, as well as to their author.

But, to own a truth, this purpose of mine is not taken up hastily, or without sufficient motives. I am none of those flashy adventurers who set agoing before I have some stock in trade. But after scraping together a store of observation and experience, much of which is already prepared for use, I am unwilling that mankind should lose the acquisitions of a life, chiefly spent in their service. How those acquisitions were made, and what are their nature, it may be proper shortly to inform my readers.

I was born to a moderate estate in this ancient kingdom of Scotland, and being of a studious turn from my childhood, was designed by my friends to follow the law. Yet I must allow, that the parson of our parish, who loved a joke, would say, while stroking down my forehead, that it wanted *bone* for that honourable calling. I passed the usual years of education in this city, and was afterwards sent to Oxford. But when the time came for turning my thoughts to professional studies, I felt a dislike of all pursuits but those of general letters; while the shyness and indolence of my temper, unfitted me for that occupation to which I had been destined. I therefore obtained



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my father's leave to travel, and spent some years in visiting different parts of Europe.

On my father's death, I returned to my native country, and went to settle on my estate. The years of bustle which I had lately spent, were succeeded by long seclusion and quiet. I had, however, profited by my means of observation while I mixed with the world: I matured my thoughts at leisure: and though my person was at rest, my mind was not wholly inactive. The great features of the human character remain the same, though modified by the change of times; and many of the reflections which I made several years ago, will, I believe, still apply to the ways of men. Besides, I mixed with my good neighbours in the country; and sometimes paid a visit to this metropolis, to keep up my acquaintance with the living world.

My only domestic companion was my sister Judith, a person of great piety and good nature, a notable housewife, and possessed with a profound love and admiration of her brother. There has more lately been added another inmate to our household, the orphan son of a younger sister, who, with her husband, an officer in the army, fell victims to an Eastern climate. This child, thus left upon my care, has given me much of the pains and pleasures of a parent. My sister undertakes for his body, and I for his mind. It is whispered in the neighbourhood that both run some risk of being injured between us, by over indulgence; but this we consider merely as a tattle of the censorious.

During my first years of retirement, I suffered that

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listlessness to creep on me which often succeeds a period of activity. As I dosed and ruminated by the evening fire, Judith would gaze at me with fixed attention, and at length exclaim, "O brother! I am sure you have a great deal to say, if you would but let it out!"

Whether this excitement would have produced any effect, if left to itself, I cannot say; but another added its force. I found in my father's chamber, after his decease, an antique CABINET, wherein he had kept his private papers. It was curiously wrought and inlaid with tortoise-shell; and contained many drawers filled with old letters and family accounts. There were volumes of household expenditure for a century back; notes of rents and leases; receipts for brewing plague-water, extracting corns, and bottling gooseberries; with a method of potting a *Jack*, which was thought to be an invention of our family. These writings I was on the point of conveying in the lump to the kitchen fire; but my sister interfering, begged that they might be made over to her, as there was no saying what useful things they might contain.

Having thus cleared my Cabinet, I cast it into a sort of fanciful distribution, representing a map or chart of the human mind. One corner was entitled *the Passions;* with drawers which were severally appointed to *Avarice, Love, Envy, Ambition,* and the like. Another part was allotted to the *Intellect,* with its subdivisions of *Reason, Common-Sense, Interest, Knowledge of the World,* &c. A third was given to *Morals,* including *Piety, Benevolence, Natural*

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*Affection, Friendship, Education, Marriage,* &c. A fourth was entitled *Politics,* under which were classed the duties, rights, and interests of man, as combined in society. Another consisted of *Manners,* containing in its subordinate parts, *Good-breeding, Delicacy, Affectation, Fashion,* &c. Under the department of *Imagination,* I ranked the *Study of Letters, Poetry, Wit,* and *Criticism.* It is difficult to give my readers a proper notion of the lucid order to which I attained, after long and painful study, in disposing all the shades and varieties of human nature. When I had completed my scheme, I used to pause and dwell upon it, with all the complacency of an artist. My readers will doubtless long to partake of this pleasure; and as it is not easy to convey in words a proper image of so curious a structure, I design, at some future time, to publish a drawing of my Cabinet, with its orders and subdivisions, taken by an eminent hand.

But an acquaintance with the structure and functions of the mind, as of the body, is chiefly useful in leading to the remedy of certain disorders to which both are liable. Having thus formed, therefore, a system of the *Anatomy* and *Physiology* of the mind, I next proceeded to investigate its *Nosology* and *Pathology,* or the several distempers to which it is subject, with the most approved modes of cure. On these matters I set myself, with all diligence, to inquire and digest. The fruit of my studies was gradually embodied in the shape of short hints, or finished discourses, each of which was consigned to its proper drawer or compartment, till at length my Cabinet was

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nearly full. When in this state, I could not but look upon it as a great system or magazine of intellectual medicine, wherein the description of the healthy subject, the symptons of disease, and the method of cure, were united.

I at first had thoughts of bequeathing this collection to posterity, as a token of my love for mankind; but on considering the many risks which it might run from falling into ignorant hands, I resolved to give the world a taste of it while I was yet alive. I accordingly removed my Cabinet, with my family and myself, to this city; and propose to send forth a short prescription from time to time, for the good of my fellow citizens. I chuse this occasional form of publication, in preference to the more regular habits of my predecessors, partly for the indulgence of my own indolence, and partly lest I might sometimes be called on to speak when I had nothing to say. I shall, however, in searching through my mental *pharmacopœia*, take care to select from such quarters as seem most adapted to the prevailing maladies; and although some of my doses be already made up, I doubt not that they will suit many existing cases. Besides, as I still continue to practise, I shall occasionally compound new prescriptions, as circumstances may require.

I have only to add, that I have reserved a large drawer at the bottom of my Cabinet, for the contributions of all who may wish either to give or to ask advice; whose cases, hints, or complaints, shall be duly attended to.

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## II. NEIGHBOURS IN THE COUNTRY.

———Scopulum conscendit, et omnem
Prospectum latè petit.

VIRG.

BEFORE proceeding to my more regular duties, it may not be amiss to cast a glance around my neighbourhood in the country, and introduce my readers to the society with whom I have chiefly lived for these several years past.

The first whom I shall mention is the *Lady Evergreen*, widow of a worthy Baronet of that name, who left her a plentiful fortune, unincumbered with children, or other burden. In her younger days she was esteemed a beauty, and, though now somewhat past her prime, has still the remains of a fine person. This she takes care to assist by the advantage of dress; and considers her friseur and milliner as important members in her cabinet council. She is naturally friendly and good-humoured; and never having troubled herself with care or thought, she still retains much of the gaiety and disengagement of youth. Living always in affluence, and rather conferring than receiving favours, she has been listened to with deference by those around her; and has hence got one or two favourite maxims on which she sets a high value, as the fruit of her own observation, and which she deals out, from time to time, among her friends. She keeps a

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large and hospitable establishment in the country; and in winter removes, with her family, into this city.

Her only constant inmate is a distant relation of her own, called *Miss Phebe Pliant*, who takes the chief conduct of her household; and comports herself, towards her patroness, and indeed towards all man and woman kind, with the most pleasing assentation and harmony of opinion. The only time I ever heard her take the opposite side of any question, was in a debate on the fattening of turkeys; in which she boldly upheld the mode practised at Evergreen Hall against all the world. But as her own and her patroness's credit were both concerned here, I do not give this as a complete proof of original thinking, or independence of spirit.

A little farther off, in the same direction, live *Mr* and *Mrs Megrim*. Mr Megrim is a few years younger than myself, and was an only child. As he had a feeble constitution, he was never permitted to leave home; but was brought up under the eye of his parents, whose chief care was his health. It was soon found that study injured his digestion, so he was not fatigued with reading. Hence, though a man of tolerable understanding, he has little acquired knowledge; and is chiefly remarkable for indolence, indecision, and an extreme attention to his health. He married, by his mother's choice, a relation of his own, who succeeded the good old lady in the charge of his person. And as they have no family to employ their thoughts, they have dwindled into a couple of valetudinarians, whose chief care is to watch the state of

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their bodies;—the lady, as in duty bound, keeping her ailments in a due subordination to those of her lord and master. At day-break, they are awakened to a draught of ass's-milk. Then, so many turns are to be taken in the hall before breakfast. A certain hour in the forenoon summons them to an airing in their carriage; and they are met on their return home, with a basin of restorative soup, which carries on the system till dinner time. The evening has, in like manner, its stated observances. And thus—with the occasional demands of swallowing potions and cordials—stopping out the east wind—seeing the sheets aired—and consulting Buchan's Domestic Medicine—the whole day is accounted for. It seems a little silly thus to waste life merely in studying its own preservation; yet it cannot be denied, that, to minds which have no other pursuit, this reiteration of petty employment is in itself a source of interest and happiness.

On the opposite quarter is the *Grange*, the seat of *Mr Abraham Hazy*. Mr Hazy is a large phlegmatic man, with an upright walk, solemn utterance, and dull eye. He believes himself, with perfect sincerity, to be one of the cleverest persons alive, and in his own family passes for an oracle. He ascribes it wholly to a neglect of his hints, that mankind are still so far behind in the several branches of civil polity. The projects with which he has favoured the world towards the improvement of roads, canals, and machinery, are past reckoning; but, through some blindness, none of them have yet been followed by

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any body but himself. Mr Hazy often expresses his wonder at the difficulties which perplex other men in forming their opinions; as, for his part, he owns that he seldom feels any, on the nicest subjects. When in company, he sits with a smile of complacent superiority, during the conjectures or debates which are going on; and at length interposes with—"I beg pardon, gentlemen,—but if you will give me leave, I think I can explain this matter."

His family consists of his wife, an unmarried sister, and a daughter; he has, besides, several sons, who are settled in the world. Mrs Hazy is a good-natured uneducated woman, who considers her husband's province to be that of *thinking* for the whole family; and confines herself to the concerns of her kitchen and dairy. Miss Penelope Hazy, again, and her niece, Miss Lucretia, are ladies of high accomplishment, and professed *beaux-esprits*. They read Rousseau, and talk sentiment; nay, have ventured, at times, on a small piece of fugitive poetry on their own account. Miss Penelope one day took me aside, and requested my thoughts on a pastoral of her own composing. I excused myself on the score of having no judgment in such matters; and although I could perceive that I sunk greatly in my credit with Miss Penelope by this avowal, yet I accounted myself lucky in escaping so well.

Next to Mr Hazy, lives my good friend *Admiral Truman*. He began life by marrying at nineteen a girl of the same age, whom he had danced with at a ball at Plymouth. By way of retrieving this error,

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the Admiral, after her decease, entered into a more prudent connection with the widow of a ship-chandler at Redriff, who is his present helpmate. At the period of the marriage she was aged fifty-five, a few years older than the Admiral, and in possession of a good jointure; which last, to ordinary observers, seems to have been her chief attraction.

The Admiral has much of the merits and prejudices of his profession. While on service, he shewed great courage and activity; and still, when taken in the right cue, is not without generous feelings. But like all men of strong passions, little reflection, and unacquaintance with the business of life, he is too apt to think every body in a combination to take advantage of him; and determines the merit of all actions or persons merely as they chance to forward or oppose his desires. As is natural to such a temper, he thinks that his services have been overlooked; and vents his indignation, very impartially, between his competitors, and those by whom they were preferred. In what regards money, he cannot so properly be called avaricious, as captious and niggardly in trifles; a change of disposition not uncommon from a youth of thoughtless profusion.

His lady is of a showy and obtrusive vulgarity, aiming at high life, as befits a person bred in the metropolis. She is pretty warm in her temper, as well as her spouse; and as she insists on the management of her own fortune, there are, upon occasion, high tides in the family.

A little beyond the Admiral resides *Colonel Gorget*,

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a worthy veteran of the old school. He is a man of a kind benevolent disposition, and moderate capacity; with much of the nice honour and romance of his profession, and one or two of its foibles. He is a bachelor—lives comfortably on a slender income—is happy to see his friends—keeps good wine, and circulates it freely:—Though it must be owned, that towards the close of the second bottle, the narratives of *Bunker's-hill* and *Saratoga* become rather inextricable.

The last of my immediate neighbours is the family of *Sir William* and *Lady Constant*, whom I consider as patterns of a British country-gentleman and his wife. Sir William is possessed of both solid and elegant talents, which have received every improvement that education or society can give. By inclination, he would never quit the bosom of his family, and the pursuits which engage him there: but he is ready at every call of duty or friendship. He is moreover sensible of the political blessings which he enjoys as an inhabitant of this island; and declines no public exertion which may be necessary to preserve them. He has long represented our county ably and uprightly in Parliament. Lady Constant is every way worthy to be the partner of such a man. In her, the graces of good society, and many acquired accomplishments, are united with a sincerity, simplicity, and affection, which would have made the lowest station respectable. After being charmed with the wit and elegance of her conversation, I have turned, with far stronger feelings of delight to see her engaged in the duties of a wife, a mother, and a Christian. This excellent couple are

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blessed with a large family, whom they breed up to resemble themselves. Their friendship has formed one of the chief enjoyments of my life.

These are my immediate neighbours. Others at a greater distance, may, on some future occasion, be introduced to the acquaintance of my readers.

---

## III. THE ASSISTANCE OF FRIENDS.

Quid sequar, aut quem?
HOR.

WHEN I first thought of giving these my lucubrations to the world, I resolved to consult with some of my friends before I ventured on so bold a step, partly for advice, and partly in the hope of receiving a little help in an undertaking which I considered as beyond my single powers. I therefore made a journey to this city, bringing with me several hints and sketches, which might serve as a sample of my performance, and enable my advisers to judge both of the plan and execution. I had dwelt so long on the project, and so heated my mind with its importance, that I expected every body else would feel as much enthusiasm about it as myself,—would see the justness of my notions respecting it,—and be ready with all the encouragement and assistance in their power.

Accordingly, the morning after my arrival, I sallied forth, and began with my friend Dr Dactyl. The

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Doctor is a man of great labour and erudition, and has published several works of good repute on classical literature. I found him (to use the phrase applied to another great Doctor) *buffeting with his library*, surrounded with folios, and enveloped in a cloud of dust, which he was vainly endeavouring to keep in subjection by the use of a towel. A profusion of manuscripts, of all shapes and dimensions, were scattered about the room; and on almost every chair and table lay an open book noted with marks of reference. It was with some difficulty that I procured a seat amidst this chaos; but after the commotion had a little subsided, I opened my plan to the Doctor. After hearing me attentively,—"Alas, my good sir," said he, "such things are surely below your notice. Why throw away your time in the most vain of all attempts—to teach those who will not learn;—to improve those who think themselves all perfect;—to correct the incorrigible;—in a word, to amend the most untractable of all God's creatures,—a modern fine lady or gentleman. I think you might turn your labour to a better account. I am at present engaged in a philosophical digest of the Greek particles into one simple and uniform view, which I hope to comprise in two quarto volumes. This pursuit has employed my attention for more than twenty years. I should be happy of your assistance in one of the subordinate branches. Your name I undertake to mention with due honour in the preface; and when the plan is completed, think of the credit to yourself, and advantage to society, in comparison with a few trifling

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essays." I attempted a word or two in defence of my undertaking; but finding that I made little impression on the Doctor, and only sunk lower in his esteem at every rejoinder, I was fain to take my departure, leaving him to the prosecution of his warfare with the Greek particles.

The next person to whom I addressed myself was Mr Languid. He is a man of easy fortune, fine talents, and extreme indolence, with a little of that failing to which such tempers are liable, a disposition to discourage and depreciate exertion in others, who are more active than himself. He passed through the usual course of education with high promise; but the stimulants of youth and emulation being over, and the necessity of labour not coming in their room, he gradually fell into an Epicurean way of life, avoiding all cares or serious employment; turning his taste for letters into a mere elegant luxury; and always finding enough to occupy his mind, without putting it to exertion. However, as he had no indispensable demands on his time, I thought he might be brought to give me some aid in my undertaking.

I called on him about mid-day, and found him pretty much in the dress and attitude in which Gil Blas describes his master Don Matthias, at their first interview: that is, in his night-gown and slippers, lounging in an easy chair, with his leg dangling over one of the arms. Instead of grinding tobacco, however, he was employed in carelessly turning over the leaves of a magazine, fresh from the press, cutting it open here and there with an ivory folder. His room

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was fitted up with elegant book-cases, through whose glass-doors their contents appeared in all the splendour of Morocco, Russia, and gilding. There were busts, globes, and maps distributed on every side, with the other apparatus of literary luxury; while massy China jars, laden with flowers, filled the room with fragrance. On his table were strewed a variety of newspapers, reviews, and pamphlets, with one or two new poems and novels; in short, all that light artillery provided in this benevolent age against the demon of *ennui*. On a distant corner of the table lay Cicero *de Officiis*, with odd volumes of *Locke on the Human Understanding*, and Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*; but from the mass of papers lying above them, and other local symptoms, I gathered that their rest had not been disturbed for some time.

I made my approaches by asking him what he was about, and rallying him in a friendly way on his idleness, with some allusions to the early promise he had excited. I then told him of my project, and expressed my hopes of his assistance. He mused a little, with some apparent interest in his looks; but soon relapsing into his usual *nonchalance*—"Indeed," said he, "you do me too much honour in supposing that my assistance could be of any service. I am so much out of the habit of writing. Nay, I almost fear—not that I would by any means discourage you,—but I fear the taste for such things is somewhat over now. Indeed, there seems to be a period in the literature of a country, when that way of writing is in vogue. Then the success of our *Illustrious Countryman* has turned



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all the world crazy after novels and romances. At the same time, I would by no means dissuade—only one should not be over-sanguine, you know, and"——"I hope," said I, "that the time will never come when good thoughts, expressed in good language, will be out of favour in this land, under whatever form they appear. Our Great Countryman has doubtless opened a new and brilliant path in letters, but I fear he has also closed it; for who will dare to follow in his footsteps? As human life moves on, it still presents varieties worthy of observation; and a good many years have elapsed since my proposed walk has been occupied. No, my friend, if I do fail, I fear it will be from more solid causes than the mere form of my lucubrations." "There is much in what you say," rejoined Mr Languid, "perfectly just indeed—only perhaps if you were to delay a little, public taste might revive—yet I should be sorry that any notions of mine should deprive the world"——As I saw that my friend was labouring between a quiet inclination to discourage me, and a wish to recommend the bitter pill by a little complimentary gilding—and withal despairing of aid in this quarter—I changed the subject.

Mr Nettletop, the person to whom I next applied, is of a very different character. He is possessed of considerable learning, though it consists rather in a tincture of several branches of knowledge, than the full mastery of any. He has much activity and perseverance, and is always engaged with ardour in one pursuit or another. It has been his fortune to get into many literary squabbles, which he carries on with no

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small vivacity and bitterness; and, in short, is one of those whose element is commotion rather than quiet. On hearing my purpose of periodical essays, he at first looked a little doubtful; then shook his head with an expression of no great encouragement; but after some further deliberation, and sundry gestures and mutterings, indicative of arguments *pro* and *con* passing through his brain, he broke forth: "Stay,—let me see,—it might be turned to some purpose too. One might give a few good sketches. There's that empty fellow *Crucible*, with his theory of Fusion;—one might shew him off with some effect. Then, that pragmatic ignorant whelp who disputed with me about the Greek *proscenium*; and the ponderous Dr *Full-bottom*, with his dreams about the colonists of Asia Minor. They well deserve a niche in a gallery of coxcombs. Yes, it will do. And then a thing hits better when coming in the anonymous form. It will answer very well. You may depend on a biting article from me now and then." "Sir," replied I very gravely, "you seem to have misunderstood me a little. If I at all go into this scheme, it shall be my object to improve all, without offending any. But in this, at least, I will be peremptory, if classes are exposed, individuals shall be sacred. That I shall at times try to be gay, as well as grave, is true; and in drawing prevailing follies, there may occasionally be features which malice may twist into a particular resemblance. But so far shall I be from intending this, that if ever I happen to discover individual features under a general portrait, they shall be expunged, at



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the risk of weakening the whole composition. General ridicule is recognised among the weapons of legitimate warfare. Personal satire I hold to be as unfair as the use of poisoned arrows or red-hot balls." "Ah," said Mr Nettletop, "is that your notion? All nonsense—nobody will taste your milk and water. It will never do, believe me."

On consulting with the Rev. Dr Longwind, he hinted to me, in a very copious reply, that the only way of making any figure in letters, was by a work of some extent and continuance. "Even a few pretty solid volumes," said the doctor, "make little impression. Here is my History of the Church, now, of which eleven volumes have been out for some time,—you would scarcely think how small the sale has been; and I do not expect the full measure of my profit or reputation, till the work be completed in eighteen or twenty." This was quite conclusive; so I proceeded from the doctor to my friend Tom Smallwit, who passes for one of the cleverest fellows of our day, and is looked upon by all the *beau monde* as a dead hand at a rebus or anagram. "Ah, my dear Sir," cried Tom, "the world is grown so nice and impatient now-a-days, that there is no getting them to read a page to an end. Nothing will do but your smart sparkling things which crack and go off in a moment. I fancy, now, that something in the style of Martial's epigrams, or Rochefoucault's maxims, would take very well.—Let me advise you to try that."

I next called on Will Shuttlecock, who is the best natured creature breathing, and I was sure would do

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all he could to assist me. He accordingly received me with the utmost kindness; heard my whole project; approved of every thing; and promised, if I would call again in a week, that he would have several essays ready for me. I was punctual to my hour; but found that Will had gone off, two days before, on a tour to England, without leaving any message for me; and was not expected back till the end of the year.

I will not detain my reader by describing all the applications I made with similar success. Some I found too busy, others too idle, and all too much preoccupied with pursuits or fancies of their own, to have any value for mine. The learned Dr Blink was immersed in the theory of the Polar Ice, and Mr Topdress was deep in the culture of cabbages. Mr Nicetooth had just entered on the investigation of a new turbot sauce; and Sir Filagree Daisy was putting the last hand to an essay on female education. I found Dr Azimuth on the very brink of discovering the *longitude;* and Mr Whirligig equally near the *perpetual motion.*

Though most declined their assistance, however, few were so niggardly as to refuse advice; and their suggestions of proper subjects for my pen, were not less various than their pursuits. I was severally recommended to the National Debt, the improvement of the high roads, the house tax, the decay of piety, the Italian opera, the lace manufacture, the Grecian chorus, the history of Methodism, the dry rot in timber, and the government of the passions. By five of my friends I was counselled to try the tragic drama; by

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three to attempt a comedy; and by one to lay the foundations of an epic poem.

This experience of the availing help of my friends, brought to my mind one of those primitive lessons of economical wisdom which I had learned in my youth from father Esop, or some of his followers. For the benefit of those who have not the book (myself being one) it may be told, from recollection, thus:—

THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

"The lark made her nest in a fair meadow: the grass grew tall and ripe for cutting; but her young brood were yet unable to fly. She came home at sunset and found them sore afraid. 'Oh, mother,' cried they, 'we heard the farmer bid his son go ask neighbour Dobson of the hill, to come and help with the haymaking to-morrow. Haste then, let us depart, or we shall all be undone.' 'Take comfort, my children,' replied the mother, 'there is no danger yet.' The morning came, and days passed on, and all was safe. But another day the lark returned, and found her little ones in trouble. 'Oh, mother,' cried they, 'it is ill with us now; for the farmer told his son that neighbour Wilkins of the dale had promised to help with the haymaking to-morrow.' 'Rest ye patient,' answered the mother, 'still there is nothing to fear.' The morning came as before, and other days passed on, and nothing happened. Again the lark returned, and her little ones cried, 'Mother, the farmer said to his son, *Forsooth boy, we will set a-haymaking to-morrow by ourselves.*' 'Said he so, my children?' cried the lark, 'Then stir ye, stir ye, for it is time to be gone.'"

In short, I discovered that, in taking my present resolution, like most others in life, I must at last decide for myself, and depend on my own resources. I therefore determined to face the public alone, trusting to the assistance of my friends after they saw me fairly engaged.

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## IV. VISIT TO MR FIDGET.

An cuiquam est usus homini, se ut cruciet?
TER.

I WAS lately invited to spend a day with my old friend Mr Fidget, at his villa, a few miles from this city. Mr Fidget is a bachelor, somewhat advanced in years, and has contracted certain weaknesses which are alleged to beset the single state. He was, even in his youth, apt to be difficult about trifles; and the force of habit, and living much alone, have so multiplied and magnified such matters in his eyes, that it is not easy for one unused to his ways to avoid giving him offence. I was accompanied by another friend, and my little nephew, whom I brought at Mr Fidget's especial desire, though I foresaw no good from the approaching conjunction. I spent the most part of the journey out, in a precautionary lecture to the boy, touching all points of his conduct and demeanour through the day: but I must own that my hopes of the issue were not sanguine.

We arrived about two o'clock in the afternoon, and were received by our host at the front door. The house and grounds had an air of quaint and particular ornament. The walks, hedges, and borders, were cut into uncommon shapes and directions, all of which, we were assured by our friend, had a peculiar fitness in the nature of things; though this was less obvious

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to others than himself. On alighting from the carriage, I observed a sort of hesitation and uneasiness in Mr Fidget, before entering the house; and at last found that this proceeded from our want of attention to clean our shoes at the door. This ceremony having been complied with, we were ushered into the lobby, where it was my ill fortune to give further offence, by hanging my hat on our host's own particular peg, a breach of privilege which is never allowed. At length we reached the parlour, and found prepared for us a glass of milk punch, and a biscuit, by way of whet, before going out to our walk. I at first declined this refreshment, as being against my usual habit: but observing that Mr Fidget was hurt at being put out of his way, I was obliged to comply, at the expense of a headach for half an hour after.

We now prepared for our walk; but on going to the window an ugly black cloud was lowering, and threatened rain. This involved our friend in a world of perplexities and hesitations, whether to go out or stay within. He went from the window to the weather-glass, and from the weather-glass to the window; —drummed against the mercury with his fingers, to force out the truth;—balanced all the probabilities for and against,—the age of the moon,—the course of the wind,—the appearance of the hills,—"and found no end in wandering mazes lost." I ventured to hint that we might take umbrellas, which, after some further argument, was approved of; and forth we fared, Mr Fidget, besides his umbrella, having fortified with his double-soled shoes, and oil-skinned hat. We had

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not got far, when he recollected that the parlour window had been left open. It was therefore necessary to step back, and warn the servants to be careful to shut it in case of a shower.

We went first to the garden, where every thing to be sure was kept in nice order; but all the time we were there, I could perceive that our poor friend was on thorns. My unlucky boy, (the vivacity of whose spirits was not to be kept in total subjugation, though he is really a considerate child for his years), was every moment erring against some standing order of the place. Sometimes he was plucking down the tall climbing pease; sometimes intruding on the border; sometimes squeezing through the espaliers; sometimes dabbling after the gold fishes in the pond. Nay, he would even now and then cast an unlawful glance at the wall-fruit, which hung in tempting show around the garden: and it required all my authority to prevent invasion. The peaches and pears were quite ripe; but it seems our friend had fixed a particular day for pulling them; which fated period, for our ill luck, was not yet absolved.

Our next destination was the dairy and poultry-yard, where all the apartments and appurtenances were kept with the accuracy of a drawing-room. Of course, our praises were given without any expense of conscience. Our evil demon, however, would now have it, that Mr Fidget bethought himself of shewing us his new method of draining, which was at some distance across the fields. We resisted as far as polite-

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ness would allow, saying, that we could not think of troubling him ; but he made a point of it. We set forward accordingly, leaping over fences, and scrambling through furze and underwood, till at length we reached the field in view. We found it a perfect quagmire, which our host told us was a sure proof of the ultimate success of the experiment. Our knowledge, however, was not attained without some cost. In floundering through the mud, I lost a shoe ; while my poor little boy, in attempting to leap over a drain, tumbled in, to the grievous damage of his white trowsers. Soon after, our friend's hat was blown off, over an adjoining bank, which we saw not without a sort of vindictive satisfaction ;—and after a fruitless search, he was fain to tie his handkerchief over his wig, and propose making the best of our way home.

As we reached the house, our host perceived on the grass-plot in front certain fragments of white paper which neglect had lavished there. Notwithstanding the want of his hat, he set himself to collecting these, one after another, and as the wind blew them about, this was a service of no small time and difficulty ; but, what was most unreasonable, he insisted on our awaiting the whole operation ; crying, " Stop a moment, gentlemen,—one moment,—I shall not detain you more than a moment."

Our walk gave us a good appetite, and my friend promised to regale us on five-year-old mutton of his own feeding, and a pigeon-pie dressed according to a receipt of approved delicacy. The approach of din-

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ner, I have observed, diffuses a general complacency over the minds of men; and though our host was put a little out of sorts by the cook having delayed it three minutes and a quarter beyond the appointed hour (which he duly verified by his stop-watch), we sat down, with one or two other guests, in tolerable good humour. This happy aspect of affairs was, however, of short duration, for in the very outset, it was discovered that the soup had too much salt. Scarcely had we recovered from this shock, when the fish made its appearance without lobster sauce. Even this was beginning to be forgotten, at the approach of the boasted mutton; but when it came to be cut up, it was found to be sadly overdone. To describe the looks and tones of anguish exhibited by our entertainer, on these successive disasters, and his fretful expostulations with the servants, would be endless. It was the only calamity of the whole series which annoyed his guests, who would hardly have observed the grievances complained of, but for his jealous detection and amplification of them. The servants, far from being improved by his lectures, were only more and more hurried and confounded; and in an unlucky collision, dropped the pigeon-pie on the floor, where it was shivered to pieces.

The table-cloth, however, was at last removed; and although one of the guests gave offence by drinking a glass of port wine, instead of ale, after his cheese,—another by taking pepper to his melon,—and a third by refusing a dram;—the circulation of the bottle brought us all by degrees to a good understanding

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with one another. My little nephew, however, now became a source of disquiet; for growing weary of inaction, he had risen from the table, and was making his way up to two Chinese mandarins who nodded at him from the chimney-piece. I begged that he might be allowed to go out to the fields; but new difficulties were started, of his doing or suffering mischief. At last matters were compromised by his being consigned to the footman, with manifold injunctions of care and caution.

"Thomas," said our host, "you will take good care of the young gentleman. Don't go near the quarry, as the water is deep; and remember there is a bull in the Mains park. Be sure you keep off the new gravel walk, and mind the hole in the beech avenue. I don't think the wooden bridge is very safe at present; and, d'ye hear, be particularly careful of the shrubs near the summer-house. You had better, too, keep away from the bee-hives, and the melon beds, and the young pheasants, and"—"Yes, sir," responded Thomas, (as he shut the door after a gradual close), with an emphasis which was meant to imply a receipt in full for all precautionary instructions given or omitted.

Our conversation now became agreeable, for my friend, when at rest from his anxieties, is really an accomplished and benevolent man; and the peculiarity of his way of thinking gives a not unpleasant zest to his discourse. In due time we were summoned to the drawing-room to tea and coffee, and here a new crop of distresses sprung up. I incautiously went to stir the fire, but was given to understand that this

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was a function reserved for the master of the house, who had, it seems, an art and mystery in coaxing up a flame unknown to other mortals. A second gentleman was taking down a print from the wall, to examine it more nearly; but was entreated to desist, the thing being against all rule in the family. A third offered to cut himself a slice of bread; but was interrupted by a servant, in great tribulation, our friend being nice in the level of his loaf, and suffering no hand to interfere but his own. Another laid hold of a newspaper which was just brought in; but as he was about to tear off the cover, it was suddenly snatched from him, that being also among the reserved prerogatives. In short, perils beset us on every side, and we hardly ventured to sip our tea without fear and trembling. At length the hour of departure came, which we all saw with pleasure, and were glad to be relieved from a restraint at once troublesome and ridiculous.

On my way home, I could not but reflect on the folly of indulging in such peculiarities, which make us unhappy in ourselves, and disagreeable to others. It is a risk which those who live alone are chiefly exposed to, and are most interested in guarding against. They should put a careful watch over the progress of their small likings and dislikings, to prevent things really indifferent from growing into importance by habit. But such is the tendency of the human mind to magnify whatever is considered solely in relation to itself, that the only complete security against such habits is, to mix occasionally with our fellow creatures,

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and accustom ourselves to regard our own concerns somewhat in the relation and proportion which they bear to the general mass. The society, the example, and observation of others, smooth down the corners and protuberances which break out around our character, and gradually mould us into a harmony with our kind.

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## V. AN EVENING PARTY.

Agebatur huc illuc, vario turbæ fluctuantis impulsu.
TACIT.

SOME time ago I received a little note, written on paper nicely gilt and perfumed, with the following words :—" Lady Evergreen at home on Tuesday evening the 15th, from nine till twelve." I was, on the first perusal, at a loss to know what this meant; not perceiving how I was concerned in her Ladyship's being at home or abroad; but was speedily put into a right train by my sister Judith, who informed me that this was the only genteel way of inviting company now-a-days. She added that she had got a similar billet; that it would be a delightful party; and we must certainly go. I had some qualms and misgivings as to my own particular; but these were soon overcome; and I desired she might write an answer, returning our humble service, and promising to wait on her Ladyship. On this Judith smiled,—" O no, brother, there is no need of such antediluvian formali-

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ties. I see you are quite behind.—But stay, how long is it—let me see—three weeks. O, we shall have time enough to put ourselves into some order. And, brother, you must really allow me to make you a little decent."

I answered very gravely that I was not aware of any indecency in my appearance or behaviour. "My dear brother," replied she, "believe me, you are quite unfit to be seen. From living so long in the country, and—in short, you must really give yourself up to my direction in this matter, who know a little of the world." Where my worthy sister had picked up her knowledge of the world I could not divine; but in all affairs of dress and fashion, the ladies have a sort of intuitive tact and apprehension; and proceed with that air of authority which belongs to persons conscious of acting in their own province. I soon found, therefore, that all resistance was vain.

In the course of being *made decent*, as my sister called it, I endured no small disturbance and oppression. I was hauled about from shop to shop for several days, besides being subjected at home to the operations of tailors, hatters, hosiers, shoemakers, and friseurs, without number. The coxcomb who appeared in the last capacity, put me out of all temper. The peruke which I use is of a very pretty and becoming fashion, and was quite in vogue the last time I mixed with the world. I have accordingly been at pains to keep up the exact cut of it ever since. The fellow, however, treated it with the utmost contempt, and talked of his *Brutus crop, Péruque en patriote,*

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*Tête au naturel,* and other silly jargon, with which he would fain have persuaded me to make a spectacle of myself. Judith, I am ashamed to say, rather took his part; but seeing that things tended to a total rupture, she at length thought it prudent to mediate between us; and matters were compromised by my consenting to a few fashionable curls and flourishes.

By the time that the important evening came, my poor sister had so fatigued herself with her preparations, that she was unable to go. She exhausted all her remaining powers in equipping me out properly, and giving me instructions how to behave myself, and to observe every thing that passed, that I might tell her when I came home. I was then despatched in a hackney-coach, and soon arrived at my Lady Evergreen's house, which is in one of the most fashionable squares of the New Town. Here the tumult which appeared at the entrance struck me with some dismay; and the danger I found to be far from imaginary; as I had several hairbreadth escapes, after alighting, in making my way to the door, amidst the bouncing of footmen, the wheels of carriages, and the poles of sedan chairs.

On entering the landing-place, I met so many persons coming away, that I began to reproach myself for being too late. But I was relieved from this apprehension by finding myself impelled forward by as many new comers. I was greatly assisted by this support in my progress up stairs; whilst, at every flight of steps, I heard my name vociferated by a footman with the lungs of a Stentor. As I saw one of them preparing to bawl, I whispered, that he might save

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himself the trouble, as his lady and I were old friends; but he only stared at me, and then roared louder than all the rest. On entering the room, I found my worthy hostess niched in a corner, near the door, like an Egyptian mummy, receiving all who came, and then passing them forward, as quickly as possible, into the vortex. I proposed to have made an apology for my sister's absence, but before I could utter a word, I was borne forward by the pressure. I was soon relieved from all difficulties how to proceed, by being wedged so close that I could neither stir hand nor foot; so I resigned myself patiently to the disposal of fate. I was, after a little while, conveyed some paces onward, and came in contact with my friend Miss *Phebe Pliant*. Though her hands were full of business, she favoured me with a most engaging smile and whisper,—" My dear sir, it was so kind of you to come." I could not help thinking that it would have been kinder to all parties (myself included) if I had staid away.

I was soon afterwards brought opposite to the agreeable Miss *Biddy Tattle*, who immediately accosted me;—" La! my dear sir, who would have thought of seeing you here?—How have you been this age? —Well, I am so glad we have met—I have a thousand things to say to you—What a charming party —Every body in town worth looking at—How prodigiously hot it is—Did you observe Mrs Ostrich's head?—Heavens! what tall awkward creature is that in the yellow?—Are you going to Lady Lustre's ball to-night?—What a lovely air that was we had from



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Lady Fanny Fugue just now—And then Mr Minim's *obligato*"——Some of these last words were sent back by snatches, as the fair utterer was vanishing in the multitude which closed between us.

I now turned my eyes towards the music which Miss Biddy had so much praised, and beheld several performers engaged, in dumb show, at divers instruments, and pretty lips extended as if in song; but not one distinct note reached my ear amidst the

> Universal hubbub wild
> Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused.

I could not but admire, however, the good nature and patience of the musicians, who went through all the motions, in regular form, before so unthankful an audience.

I now found myself near a sofa, on which were seated a lady and gentleman, who seemed engaged in an easy *nonchalant* conversation, far removed above the noisy stir which was passing around. A lady of my acquaintance coming up, told me, that these were persons of prodigious high fashion; and that nothing was so vulgar as to take any notice of what was going on.

On getting to a more open space, which enabled me to look around, I was charmed with many blooming countenances and graceful figures, which I saw on every side of me; and was almost forced to allow that the beauty of my countrywomen had not much fallen off since the days of my youth. While engaged in those pleasing contemplations, a young lady with a pretty languishing air brushed past, leaning on a gen-

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tleman's arm. "Pray, Mr Daffodil," said she, "do you think Miss Carmine's beauty so extraordinary?" "By no means," replied he, "mere white and red; but nothing touching,—no soul." "Well, I am sure," rejoined she, "you must admire Miss Tiptoe's dancing—that *pas à la sauterelle* is the finest thing—and then her waltzing!" "Why, in the footing I allow there is merit, and she has a tolerable *à plomb*; but no volume, no grace." "O, but surely," resumed the lady, "her execution is wonderful. Her mamma told me she practised four hours a-day with *Monsieur Pirouette*, all the time she was in London." "That may be, but she is a mere display dancer, after all. She wants that richness of movement—that floating elegance—that *gusto grande*,—which enchants us so much in Miss Simper." "O you wicked flatterer," cried the fair creature, striking him with her fan; "but to be sure in dancing, *grace* is every thing."

I now met the elegant Mrs Basbleu, attended by Dr Dungeon, who was holding forth on Greek prosody. I admired the grave face of attention which she kept towards the Doctor, while the other side saluted her passing acquaintance with the prettiest smile imaginable.

I happened now to be brought close to a small table, where a lady and gentleman were engaged at chess. As I was pondering with myself on this effort of philosophical abstraction in persons so young, and doubting whether Plato or Diogenes could have shewn a greater superiority over the frivolous engagements of the world, I was accosted by my friend Mr Acid.



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I pointed out the circumstance to him, and expressed my admiration of this serious couple. "O aye," said he,—"no end to the shapes that vanity will put on."

At this time a strong current, in which I found myself entangled, began to set in towards the further end of one of the rooms. On stretching myself up to discover the source of this attraction, I perceived a table of refreshments displayed. Not feeling any inclination that way, I endeavoured to keep my ground, and allow the stream to flow past; but this far exceeded my power. I was therefore carried nearer the table, and could not help being a little shocked at the squeezing, shouldering, and elbowing, which prevailed on every side. This, to do the parties justice, proceeded less from any indecorum in them, than from the manner of the arrangement itself. Then came the handing of ices, and jellies, and fruit, and glasses of wine, and slices of turkey, which, in the manifold collisions taking place, seldom reached their destination without some misfortune. Meantime the impatience of those coming up, and the unwillingness of those in possession to resign their places, still added to the pressure and confusion. After suffering considerably in this tumult, I at length, by great exertion, got to a place where I had room to turn round, and found myself in the neighbourhood of a whist party, composed of dowagers of both sexes. Old Lady Midnight, who was one of them, suddenly naming me aloud, begged I would go to the table, and fetch her a glass of negus. It may be guessed how fit I was for this Herculean service, and how much I stood

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aghast at the demand. I muttered some words of acquiescence, however, and turned away as if to perform my embassy; but finding the road clear, I took advantage of the opportunity, and slipped down stairs.

Sitting, a few days afterwards, with Lady Evergreen, she asked me how I liked her assembly. I answered, that it was a fine show, if there had been room to see it. "Dear me," replied she, "can you dislike the easy style of our society now-a-days, where every one may come and go as they choose? Would you have us return to the formal supper, and everlasting game at *vingt-un*?" "Why, Madam," said I, "there is such a thing as a medium in nature; and I do not see why agreeable society might not exist somewhere between stiffness on the one hand, and crowds on the other; for it happens unluckily that when mankind are assembled together beyond certain numbers, whatever be their rank or dress, they partake too much of the nature of a mob." "O," said she, "you have been spoiled by living so long in the country; but we shall soon bring you round." "I fear," replied I, "that there is another disqualification still more fatal; and that it will become me to remember the advice of the poet,

> "Go sober off, before a sprightlier age
> Come tittering on, and shove you from the stage;
> Leave such to trifle with more grace and ease,
> Whom folly pleases, and whose follies please."

"Pshaw," rejoined her ladyship, "this is all affectation and indolence; besides, it is your business to observe manners and their changes; and one change,

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you will grant, we have made for the better, of late years—that your sex no longer come into the presence of ours, transformed by the bottle into brutes." "That, madam, I allow, is a great and solid improvement; and one which we owe, like all improvements in domestic life, to your sex. Ah, Lady Evergreen, how much are you fair creatures answerable for our faults, since you can make us whatever you please." "Well," replied she, "I vow that is so handsome and so gallant, that, to satisfy you, I will positively limit my next party to a hundred select friends."

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## VI. ACCOUNT OF MR ACID.

Difficilis, querulus.
HOR.

I mentioned in my last paper, the name of my friend Mr Acid, a gentleman of this city, with whom I have long been on habits of esteem and intimacy. Although his character is somewhat of a severe and peculiar cast, his merits are so great, that I think I shall do my reader a favour, by bringing them better acquainted. My first introduction to him was at Oxford, where we were fellow-students, and where he was remarkable for talents, learning, and a splenetic turn of humour, but withal a great share of benevolence and generosity at bottom. He is no observer of forms, granter of propositions, or patient witness of the follies and impertinences of others; but there is a zest and originality in his notions, and a gaiety even in his

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spleen, which render his conversation agreeable. He takes delight now and then in bringing out a startling paradox, and in questioning received opinions, which cause him to be regarded with some dread by the retailers of common-places in society. Even by those who think a little deeper, his company is felt as a constraint; as it is necessary to keep all one's faculties on the alert for combat in his presence; and to advance nothing which one is not prepared to defend. He is one of those intellectual gladiators whom Johnson speaks of (and of which genus the venerable doctor was himself an egregious specimen), who consider conversation as a state of warfare, where all slips or negligences on one side, are to be taken advantage of by the other. But my friend's tactics are, on the whole, rather defensive than offensive; and to do him justice, he never violates good manners, nor presses his superiority against those who are unable to resist. For my own part, nobody is easier with him than I am; for, besides our long intimacy, and mutual esteem, I never give myself the trouble to be serious with his whims, but either turn them off with a jest, or tease him by ironical concessions, and carrying his own argument to extremes. However, I must admit, after all, that his conversation is better for an occasional relish than a constant diet.

One of my friend's favourite doctrines is the excess of suffering over enjoyment in this world. To this he has been partly led by a good many crosses and disappointments in life, added to infirm health, and a nervous habit. He will sometimes illustrate his no-

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tions on this subject, by a division of the sum of human sensations through life, into *twenty* parts. Of these parts *twelve* are, according to him, passed in indifference: *five* in sensations more or less painful; and *three* in sensations more or less pleasurable. But then (he will add), as pain is, in its nature, capable of a degree of intensity far beyond pleasure, the amount of the former is, on the average of life, at least double that of the latter. Indeed, continues he, after the first heyday of youth is over, almost the only thing we taste, deserving the name of positive pleasure, is the cessation of pain. Then briskly turning to me, he asks, "Have you any doubt of it?"

"Yes," I answer, "one or two little pigmy doubts. I do not know that it is contrary either to reason or religion to maintain the excess of suffering here below. Many pious men have entertained that notion; and in particular instances the fact may be so. But I have some doubts of the general doctrine; because I suspect that passion weighs a little in the decision. We count and register—we colour and exaggerate—our pains,—but forget our pleasures." "Quite a mistake," replied he, "I note down both with the utmost impartiality. I have kept a record for some time past as regularly as a rain-gage, and am sure I am right." "You remember the argument," said I, "of a splenetic enough philosopher, Voltaire, in opposition to your dogma: 'It is plain that there is more good than evil in this world, since few men like to leave it*.'"

* Il est prouvé qu'il y a plus de bien dans ce monde, puisqu'en effet peu d'hommes souhaitent la mort.

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"Pish!" replied Mr Acid, with an impatient sneer, "mighty fine stuff truly, from the author of *Candide*. But to see how coolly one half of a question may be overlooked; as if, forsooth, our chief objection to dying were the love of life. The fear of death is a passion wholly distinct from the love of life, and infinitely stronger; so strong indeed, that it keeps those in life to whom life is a burden; and who, could they be sure of non-existence only,—of mere negation,—would throw it away with loathing. The fear of death is the dread of unknown change,—of continued suffering,—of suffering which may even exceed what we endure here. This it is (as our great poet hath expressed it), *which makes calamity of so long life*. And he has indeed summed up the whole argument, in two lines, with ten times more truth and philosophy than the petulant Frenchman. We are retained in life by that hesitating principle

> Which makes us rather bear those ills we have,
> Than fly to others that we know not of.

No, sir, were it not for this feeling, depend upon it, that nine out of ten would anticipate the summons of nature."

"But another great poet," rejoined I, "tells us that existence is desirable, even though in pain:

> For who would lose,
> Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
> Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
> To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
> In the wide womb of uncreated night,
> Devoid of sense and motion.

"Why, sir," said Mr Acid, "this only proves what

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exceeding foolish things wise men will sometimes say." "Well," replied I, "you shall have the testimony of a more calm philosopher than Voltaire. Dr Franklin declares, when at the age of sixty-six, that he would willingly pass his life over again in every particular as it had been."—"Why," replied my friend, "Franklin's case was peculiar, and an exception from the common rule. He was a singularly lucky man; lucky in his temper, and in his fortunes. Born in a humble condition, he rose, by a quiet, uninterrupted progress, to influence, wealth, and fame. Add to this, that he was blessed with constant bodily health,—a cool, almost phlegmatic temper,—and an active inquiring intellect. He was called to bear an important part in the world, which he went through without much trouble, anxiety, or hazard. He had, in his fate and constitution, all the elements of happiness. But I can produce the testimony of a finer genius, and greater philosopher still,—who acted a more conspicuous part too, and on a grander theatre,—but who differed widely from him in his estimate of a past life: 'Si quis Deus,' exclaims Cicero, 'mihi largiatur, ut ex hac ætate repuerascam, et in cunis vagiam, valdè recusem.'"

But a truce with my friend's paradoxes for the present, though I may return to them on some future occasion. In the mean time, I will close this sketch by mentioning, that the demon which possesses him is, like that of Jacques, but a *humorous sadness*, which derives its origin from real feeling and benevolence of heart, and is excited more frequently by the sufferings of others than his own. He often affects

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harshness to conceal excessive sensibility. As a specimen of his character I shall here insert two letters, which will portray it better than any description I can give. The first was addressed to him by a little grocer of this city, who had fallen into his debt, from some advances which my friend had made, to purchase and fit up a house and shop for him. The second is his answer. This man, by way of return for my friend's generosity, had given a preferable mortgage to other creditors over the very house bought with his money; and on Mr Acid's demand of repayment, his *protegè* sent him the following letter:

"HONOURED SIR,—I did receive your honour's very esteemed favour of the 14th instant, per penny post, now lying before me, and notes contents, and would have answered the same before this present, but was badly with the pains, and my wife and youngest child has also been in trouble, but thank God, something better to-day; and also two of the neighbours is down in the ague, and great trouble in our wynd. As to your honour's demands, is very sorry not to be convenient at present to answer the same, as times has been so bad, but hopes they will mend; and several bills that came pressing on me last week, and for fear of worse was obliged to get them settled, hoping your honour's further indulgence; and indeed, your honour has let us off so long, and has been so kind, that I did think (and my wife), that your honour was going to be agreeable to excuse me the same, times being bad, and I had a hard bargain of the shop, and repairs

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come heavy, besides seven shillings and sixpence of stent and water duty, which is a shame to ask so much taxes for a small lodging like this; and has besides six childer to provide for, and my wife badly.—All being your honour's humble servants to command,

" RALPH CARRAWAY."

My friend's answer was as follows:

" SIR,—I cannot immediately perceive how the ague being in your wynd should be a reason for your failing to pay your lawful debts;—still less for your giving security to others over the house which I bought for you, and which I was weak enough (trusting to your good faith) not to secure in the first instance for myself. I have hitherto given you too long indulgence, and thence you conclude that I must excuse you the debt altogether. This is but scurvy logic. As to your wife and six children, you might as well say you chose to keep a coach and six horses. You have no more right to keep the one than the other at my cost. I suppose you think yourself entitled to plead this excuse with me, because, forsooth, I am a bachelor. But why am I so, except that I cannot afford to be otherwise; and you should have thought of that as well as I. Nevertheless, I mean to forgive you the money; and now send you a discharge in full. But return me no thanks,—nor feel the smallest gratitude,—for I have no merit in what I have done. I do it against my better judgment, merely to escape the pain of a weak feeling of compassion, which is only

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another name for folly. If this brings you out of debt, endeavour to keep so; and if your children recover their health, and you will give over the idle practice of getting more, you may yet do well enough.—Yours, &c. "MARMADUKE ACID."

"P. S.—I have desired my housekeeper, who carries this letter, to see whether your wife or child need any cordial, or other small comfort, in their sickness. Let me know, but do not impose on me."

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## VII. A VISIT FROM THE FAIRIES.

Nocturnos Lemures, portentaque Thessala.
HOR.

O then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
SHAKSPEARE.

WHAT a dull ordinary world we now live in, compared with those times when all nature was animated by the creatures of Fancy. Among the ancients, every stream and grove had its deity. Aurora hung up the colours of the morning, Ceres tended the harvest, and Favonius breathed upon the flowers. In later days, if our supernatural visitors were less graceful, they had still a kindly and social temper towards man. The *drudging goblin* was a hearty spirit, who cheered our fireside; and the dapper Fairies printed the green in their circled dance, and gladdened the

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wandering peasant with the tinklings of their tiny music.

It is sometimes not unpleasant to give one's-self up to such *chimeras*, and to image out the figures and ways of those unearthly beings. My readers all know that the *evening* so memorable in the calendar of our Scottish superstitions is lately past. It has been immortalized by our countryman Burns, in his poem of *Hallowe'en*, with that mixture of wildness and humour, which he knows so well how to unite. On that evening, I sat up, reading his poem; and musing on the different freaks and devices told in it; and the system of rules by which these are so quaintly ordered; till it was long past my usual hour of rest, and I had well nigh dropped asleep in my chair. On rousing myself, I perceived that the candles had burned low, and the fire was almost out: but as it had been built up with a heap of small coal above, which still remained untouched; and had wasted itself out beneath, leaving a half-extinguished gulf covered with a skin of fresh fuel; it came into my head, that if this superstructure were to fall in, it would break into a fine rousing fire, an hour or two hence. Well, thought I, as I rose to go to my chamber, if there be no one else to enjoy the fire, it will serve Queen Mab and her Fairies. With that, I gravely set about removing the tables and chairs to the walls, that the elves might have a proper space for their amusement.

I went to bed and fell fast asleep: but my fancy continued so closely in the same train of thought which it had been pursuing, and amidst the same

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scenes and objects, that there was scarcely any difference between the consciousness of the sleeping and waking impressions. Whether, therefore, during the scene which I am going to describe, I was truly awake or asleep, I rather leave to the conjecture of my intelligent readers, than venture any positive opinion of my own; but methought I heard, as I lay in bed, the faint noises of music and merriment from below; and slipping on my night-gown, I descended the stairs, till I came opposite the door of the parlour where I had been sitting. I here paused a moment, and listened to the sounds within, which, though now more distinct, and very pleasing, were faint and delicate. At length, summoning up courage, I softly opened the door, and beheld the room in a blaze of light, from the surface of coal having broken, and fallen in, as I had expected. On the middle of the floor, were a number of beautiful little figures, men and women, about six inches high, and perfect in all their shapes and proportions. Their dress was composed of tissues, silks, and brocades, of various colours; with many glittering ornaments, and plumes of feathers. They were engaged in dances, which they went through with the utmost agility and grace; casting off in troops, and circling round in divers figures and evolutions; and then returning into their first order with perfect accuracy. Sometimes they would alter the measure from gay to grave; at one time it was sublime and stately; at another brisk; and again slow and languishing; but in every change they performed with equal propriety and skill. Near the upper end of the room sat a diminutive band of

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musicians, who played on many instruments which I had never seen before. Their touch was extremely fine and small, but drew forth tones of the most ravishing sweetness, and wrought these into a variety of airs and melodies more pleasing than any I had ever heard before. While they passed from one movement to another, the dancers obeyed the changes with such exactness that they seemed swayed by every breath or touch which gave voice to the instruments of music.

My reader will guess what figure I made among this curious assembly, in my night-cap, slippers, and robe-de-chambre. I stood, for a few moments, with my hand on the lock of the door, uncertain whether to advance or retreat. But the little beings before me were so engaging in their aspect and motions; and so free from any appearance of harshness; that the sentiment I felt approached nearer to wonder and curiosity, than to fear. At length I closed the door softly behind me, and remained leaning against it. Meantime the little groups continued their pastime without taking any notice of me; and after going through a variety of measures, came at length to a general pause.

They now seemed to turn their attention towards me; when a female figure distinguished above the rest by her dress and deportment, and by a glittering *tiara* on her head, approached a few steps towards me, followed by a train of the rest. Then waving her hand with a motion the most gracious and dignified that can be imagined, she addressed me, in a slender but melodious voice, as follows:—



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"You are, I perceive, our host, to whom we are indebted for this cheerful fire, and carpet, so nicely cleared for our use. This discreet care hath drawn us to your mansion, and when treated with kindness we are not ungrateful. We are pleased to see you a witness of our pastime; and would make some return for the pleasure you have provided for us. Speak, then; what is your desire? If it be possible for us, we will gratify it. But take this caution with you, that our power extends but a little way; it has no control over the usual course of nature; and, above all, is limited to what is reasonable and moderate in the circumstances of the party."

This was a puzzling offer, and left me some time in profound meditation. I ran over in my mind the common objects of human desire,—riches, power, rank, knowledge, fame. It is true, thought I, that some increase of fortune would be convenient enough. I might make that pretty addition to my house in the country; besides opening up my lawn, finishing my garden, increasing my equipage and servants, and other agreeable things. Then the charms of power came across me: obsequious crowds bowing at my levee: peers and high-minded commoners paying their court: landed and borough interests pressing around me: with a distant view of coronets, ribbons, and garters. Anon, I beheld myself the Goliah of literature, the arbiter of taste, the flower of poesy, the admiration of the elegant, the terror of the learned. These visions came successively, and passed away.



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No, thought I; I will make a noble effort. I will be an example and reproach to the weakness of mankind; and now when so much is in my power, will shew that I can command myself to moderation.

"Beautiful Being," said I, "you see in me a man of sober views and wishes. The common allurements of this world are without charm for me. I have bounded my ambition to the desire of doing good, and improving my fellow-creatures. To this end, I have undertaken a series of little instructive lectures, which I send forth from time to time; and it is towards the advancing of this my favourite pursuit that I would ask the boon you promise me. Give me then, if you can, all the secrets of pleasing, all the powers of persuasion. Unite in my pen the elegance of Addison, the wit of Congreve, the fancy of Shakspeare. Let my invention never fail, my gravity never tire, my freedom never offend. May I go on with increasing spirit and reputation, till Vice be driven from her boldness, and Folly shamed out of her extravagances: till prejudice leave the old, and frivolousness the young: till there shall be no longer pedantry in learning, nor vanity in wit, nor error in taste, nor perverseness in reason, nor laxity in morals, nor uncharitableness in religion. And may I have the satisfaction, before I die, of hearing it allowed that all this hath been brought about by my humble endeavours."

As I ended my speech, the pretty Fairy and her train burst into a hearty fit of laughing, and continued for some time to give way to their mirth. Though I suspected that it was at my cost, there was something

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so sweet in their little voices that I could not be angry. It put me in mind of the expression of Catullus, *Ridete quicquid est domi cachinnorum.* At length the Fairy said, "My good friend, you must excuse our merriment. But you remember that I began by telling you that we could grant only what was moderate and reasonable, and in the common course of nature; and now you require of us nothing less than to make all mankind wise and good. But there are few of your species who can be trusted with the power of wishing. Though I cannot give you what you ask, I will try to think of something for your advantage. In the mean time, I fear our favour must be limited to the furnishing you with an article for your curious *Cabinet.*"

In a moment the whole scene vanished. I found myself lying snugly in bed; and heard the watchman pass, crying—Four o'clock.

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## VIII. LETTER FROM MR MEGRIM.

Velut ægri somnia, vanæ
Finguntur species.

Hor.

As I was sitting, the other morning, in my library, I was agreeebly surprised by the entrance of my old friend Jacob Steady, Mr Megrim's servant. He answered my inquiries after his master and mistress by saying, that they were *much in their poor ordinary,* (for Jacob knows his cue too well, to allow of any thing



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like health in the family); and added, that they had resolved upon coming to Edinburgh this winter, by way of a change of air, and to try if our town doctors could do any thing for them. Jacob had accordingly been dispatched before, on the important mission of hiring a house, in which he was to benefit by my assistance, and that of my sister Judith. I invited honest Jacob to take up his abode with me, while this weighty affair was pending, to which he answered with his best bow of thanks; and at the same time put into my hand a letter from his master, in the following terms:—

"My Dear Friend,—Since I had the pleasure of seeing you in the country, Mrs Megrim and myself have been thinking to try the air of your metropolis this winter, in the hope of some benefit to our health. This plan, as you will easily imagine, has cost us long and anxious deliberation; and as the choice of proper lodgings is a matter of great importance to persons of our delicate fabric, I rely on your friendship and your worthy sister's, to give us your best advice and assistance in this affair. I have sent my servant Jacob to confer with you on the subject, and give you at length many details which it is not easy to find room for in a letter. But, in the mean time, I will put down one or two things of chief consequence in regard to our project, for your friendly consideration.

'And first, as to the journey between this place and your city, the risks and difficulties of which, I own, give me serious disquiet. I shall leave home

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with my own carriage, horses, and coachman; but as the distance is too great to be made out with them in one day, I have only the choice between sleeping a night on the road, and pushing on with hired horses to the end of my journey. As to the first, I need not enlarge on the dampness of beds, the chinks in doors and windows, the unwholesomeness of provisions, the risk of poison from copper pans, the chance of infectious disorders, with the other manifold perils which attend the stopping at inns; not to mention the general noise, disturbance, and violence, which, I am told, prevail in such places now-a-days. But then, on the other hand, to trust one's safety to drunken post-boys, furious or foundered horses, with dangerous passes on the road, broken-down bridges, difficult fords, &c. is frightful in the extreme! Besides, as it grows dark, there is the farther probability of highway robbers, stealers of trunks, and other depredators. These things, of which every newspaper is full, strike me so strongly, that I am under the most painful hesitation which class of evils to prefer, and entreat your friendly sentiments on the subject. I should at all events use the precaution of sending a servant before, to inquire at the inns whether small-pox, measles, typhus, cholera, itch, or other dangerous infections, had lately appeared at any of them.

"As to the house you are to hire for me, I need not recommend, in the first place, a warm exposure, an agreeable aspect, a particular closeness of doors, windows, floors, walls, roof, and all places capable of

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admitting the wind. If the neighbours are disposed to be accommodating, they will doubtless consent to nail up their back doors and a few of their north windows, which would diminish the access of cold vapours through the partition walls. *2dly*, There must be a proper draught in the chimneys. *3dly*, I learn from good authority, that in your town, the increase of rats, bugs, and cockroaches, hath been such, as not only to destroy the comfort, but seriously to endanger the lives and limbs, of the inhabitants. I was credibly informed of a respectable lady last winter having three toes eaten off by the rats, before her family could come to her assistance. I beg that those evils may be guarded against. *4thly*, Let there be, if possible, no person of the least pretensions to fashion or gaiety within ten doors on either side, that we may not be disturbed by the din of evening assemblies. *5thly*, I would feel great comfort in the near neighbourhood of several eminent members of the faculty, and one or two good apothecaries' shops, to save trouble in wet weather. I design, however, to send my own medicine chest by the carrier, bringing with me only my small portable case. *6thly*, Be so good as look out for a correct barometer, thermometer, and hygrometer, to hang in my bed-room, that I may regulate my clothing properly for the day, and covering at night. *7thly*, Let the whole bed-clothes and other furniture, be aired and fumigated, for fear of any evil infection adhering to them. *8thly*, Above all, let there be a fitting supply of certain other accommoda-

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tions, very needful to the sick, in which your good town had heretofore the character of being rather slenderly provided.

"My cook is unluckily so old and fat, that she cannot easily be moved, so I fear we must provide another during our stay. This is indeed a serious affair, as the health and life of the whole family may be said to lie daily at her mercy. Here then, my good friend, I must rely on your prudence. If you could get any cook you may hire to come under articles never to scrub her tinned coppers—never to boil halfpence with her greens—never to put isinglass in her jelly—nor acid in her creams—nor bitter almonds in her puddings—nor garlic in her soup;—and last of all, on no pretext or occasion whatsoever, to wear any pins, needles, or other sharp instruments about her person;—it would set my mind somewhat at ease on this matter.

"There are practised in your city, as I hear, various tricks and devices, touching the preparation of viands in daily use, the prospect of which fills me with no little alarm. Thus it is rumoured, that the liquid sold for milk, is a compound of bruized snails and chalk, diluted with water: That the butter is a paste of tallow and kitchen stuff: That the mutton exposed to sale hath frequently died the death of nature: That the poultry are crammed, and expire in a fever: That the fish are sprinked with soap-lees to keep them sweet: That the bread is mixed up with alum and ground bones: That the ale is brewed from poppies and horse aloes: That the fruit is ripened under the bo-

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dily pressure of the vender: That the wine is mellowed with white-lead: And, *lastly*, that the very water which you drink is impregnated with loathsome reptiles, which, after being swallowed, multiply in the bowels with a miraculous fecundity,

" Other dangers and annoyances, my worthy friend, of no light import, have been told me. The bleakness of your exposure, it is said, never fails to induce catarrhs and rheumatism in the early spring. Your streets are commonly so wet, that even my triple-soled shoes will hardly enable me to take my needful exercise in safety: Not to mention the hourly risk from horses, carts, coaches, furious cattle, mad dogs, mobs, tottering walls, projectiles from the windows, and holes in the pavement. The growth of crime is also, I hear, so enormous of late years, that there is no stirring out after nightfall without danger of robbery, if not murder; and that the most careful barring and bolting is insufficient to secure your house against violent entry and depredation. The protection of watchmen, imperfect as it is, will, with their nocturnal bawlings, I fear, be enough to ruin the nerves, and interrupt the rest, of one indued with that unhappy delicacy of frame which hath fallen to my lot.

" How I have ever brought my mind to think of facing such dangers is really a matter of wonder to myself. It is, however, not yet too late to retract; and I shall be chiefly ruled by your friendly advice, whether, in all the circumstances, it would be better for me to go, or to stay at home. Whatever your

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opinion may be, I can at least depend on its being given with due consideration about so important a matter, and with all the freedom and sincerity to be expected from our ancient friendship—Being, my dear Sir, always your very faithful, humble servant,

"TIMOTHY MEGRIM."

"*P. S.*—I have desired Jacob to send me out, by the carrier, some tincture of jalap and magnesia pills. Please recommend him to some honest and skilful apothecary, for I am told that the mistakes committed in that way are truly terrific. Service to Miss Judith and Master Harry."

Such was my friend's epistle, and such the ticklish duty of advice laid upon me. The pictures of the *Embarras de la ville*, given us long ago by Juvenal and Boileau, were nothing to this. For my part, when I had finished the gloomy exposition, it seemed to me, that Daniel in the lion's den, or St Anthony amidst his temptations, were in a state of quiet and security compared with a devoted inhabitant of this city; and I could not but thank my stars that I had hitherto escaped with life and limbs amidst so many open and secret perils.

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## IX. SCRIBLERUS REDIVIVUS.

——— In apricum proferet ætas.
HOR.

ON my return from abroad, I spent some time in London, before coming finally to settle in my own country. One evening about dusk, as I went to visit a friend in the Temple, I was accosted, in crossing Pump-court, by a mean-looking man, of a spare and melancholy aspect, whose suit of rusty black indicated his profession of an author. He pulled from his pocket a parcel of papers which he offered me for sale; telling me, at the same time, that he had designed to publish them himself, but found that the booksellers did not care to undertake the risk. He added, that as he was about to quit London, and feared his papers might be lost, he was willing, for a small price, to leave them in the hands of one who might take some care of them. He further assured me that they were of great value, and contained matter too choice to be relished by this unworthy age: but as I seemed a person somewhat above the common stamp, it would be a sort of consolation to him to entrust his treasure to my care. Whether this compliment had any effect on me, I do not know; but I felt some pity for the poor man, and as his demands were moderate, I immediately struck a bargain with him. I desired him to call on me at my lodgings, if he staid any longer

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in town, that we might have some conversation about the papers; but he never came.

On looking into the manuscript, I found that it was entitled, "*Scriblerus Redivivus, or additional chapters of the Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus:*" And when I began to furnish my *Cabinet*, I consigned it to its appropriate drawer. I, at that time, looked very slightly over it; but, on a more attentive perusal, I found some things in it which I thought might give amusement to my readers. It is but fair to the person from whom I got the papers, to introduce them to the world with his own preface. Whether the story he tells be true or fictitious, and whether he be grave or in jest, I must leave to the judgment of the curious. I give the following extracts exactly as they came into my hands, and may perhaps resume them on some future occasion.

## SCRIBLERUS REDIVIVUS.

### PREFACE, OR PROLEGOMENA, TO THE COURTEOUS READER.

Being resident in this city of London last winter, it was my good fortune to lodge in a very pretty chamber in Grub Street, which had been occupied by divers authors of repute in modern literature. Turning over, one evening, some manuscripts which remained there in the corner of a dark closet, I fell upon a bundle of papers, tied about with a piece of tape. On throwing a hasty glance over them the name of *Scriblerus* caught my eye; and after further opening

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them up, what was my surprise and joy to find the original manuscript of the adventures of the renowned *Martinus Scriblerus*, certified under the hand of the author. On looking a little farther, I recognised those parts, which have been given to the world above a century ago, to the fidelity whereof I can bear witness. But though the manuscript was sorely mutilated, I observed sundry passages of singular merit which had been overlooked; and I thought I should do an acceptable service to the world of letters by making them public. Hereunto I was the farther moved, that I discovered in those additional fragments the germ or seeds of several of the most profound theories of modern times, in many branches of science; whence a suspicion could not but arise, that the authors thereof had gleaned and pilfered, without acknowledgment, from this source; seeing that most of them had their education in the same ancient nursery of the Muses, wherein the aforesaid manuscript was reposited.

Such being the causes, gentle reader, which induced me to become the editor of the extracts which follow, I now take my leave, lest I longer detain thee from the fruition thereof.

## Chap. VII. *Metaphysics.*

Notwithstanding the hint which Martin had received from his father, respecting the sensible qualities of objects, he still retained a propensity to the vulgar notion, that these qualities existed in the objects themselves; and indeed on the whole doctrine of our commerce

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with external things, the old gentleman was mortified to see that Martin was sadly encumbered with common prejudices. He watched for a fit opportunity to enter on this matter; and one day at dinner when Martin was busily engaged with a mess of plum-pudding, he asked him whether he supposed the plum-pudding to possess a real separate existence, independent of his sense who was eating it. "Indeed," replied Martin, "though you have said some things to me on this matter, which I do not well understand, I cannot help thinking that that part of the pudding which is still on the plate hath a separate existence, whatever may be said of that which I have already swallowed." Doctor Cornelius was enraged at this distinction. "You simpleton," exclaimed he, "what has your swallowing to do with the matter? How can the operations of cutting, or chewing, or swallowing, or digesting, affect the independent existence of a simple being or essence?" "Nay," replied Martin, "I do not see how a plum-pudding can be called a simple essence, inasmuch as it is made up of flour, and plums, and suet. I can conceive a beef-steak, or a rasher on the coals, to be a simple essence." "There again, you are wrong," cried the Doctor, "for although a plum-pudding be truly composed of more simple elements, yet, by the uniting of these into a new form, the pudding acquireth a personality, and becometh an *individuum quid*. But what I desire at present to make manifest to you is, that you have no evidence, from your senses, of the separate existence of either a plum-pudding, or a beef-steak, or of any other mate-

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rial substance whatever; and in doing so, I must counsel you, that you labour earnestly to abstract your mind from those gross ideas, which do, as it were, blunt and hebetate the edge of your understanding, and hinder it from attaining to a fitness for such sublime contemplations.

"You are to know then, my son," continued Dr Scriblerus, "that the Soul resembleth an old gouty man of quality, who is moreover troubled with sore eyes, and sitteth in his easy chair, in a darkened chamber, without stirring a foot from morning to night. And as this person, if he were poor, and could not afford to hire valets and humble friends, would know nothing of what was going on in the world; so the Soul, if she were not furnished with certain active serviceable attendants, called the Senses, who run about and pick up news, might sit in her *sensorium* from one year's end to another, and be never the wiser. These servants are *five* in number, and in their several functions and callings, fill up the establishment of a genteel family. *Sight* may be considered as the running footman; *Touch* the body servant; *Hearing* the newsman; *Taste* the caterer; and *Smell* the perfumer. And as the old gouty gentleman above mentioned must depend on the veracity of his hangers-on for all he hears; so also the Soul, being too stately to stir abroad herself, and outward things too lazy to come to her, must needs be content with what her valets aforesaid please to tell her; and who can say what knaveries and inventions they may fall upon, to serve their private ends?

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"Furthermore, you are to note, that the material things of this world are of a heavy lumbering texture, and never could be carried into the presence-chamber of the Soul, by her delicate attendants. They bring therefore along with them a light cargo of *ideas*, *simulacra*, or *sensible species*, bearing the likeness of their respective prototypes. And of this thin fare consisteth the diet of the soul."

"But what," quoth Martin, "is the idea or *simulacrum* of a plum-pudding?" "It is," said the doctor, "that notion thereof, and of its qualities, acquired by the proper senses. Some perception is obtained by the eye. But doubtless the most just idea of a plum-pudding is that which, in the process of eating thereof, entereth at the mouth, and by the sense of taste is carried to the brain." "I wonder, my dear," said Mrs Scriblerus, who was sitting by, "how you can teach the poor child such fancies. The plum-pudding goes into his belly, like other people's, and I hope he will thrive upon it, and always carry himself as other young gentlemen do, without minding your fiddle-faddle." "Woman!" exclaimed Cornelius enraged, "thy mind is so grossly sensual, and so adumbrated, and as, I may say, embruted in materials, that I doubt not thou at this moment believest that boy to be thy son, and me to be his father; and yet both suppositions may be the furthest possible from the truth of things." Mrs Scriblerus mistaking this for an imputation on her fidelity to the marriage-bed, disdained to make any reply, but immediately rose and left the room.

Cornelius then resumed his discourse. "You are

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further to know that all individual things are fugitive and transitory; and the only real existences are the *specific forms* thereof, which, as Plato teacheth, have lasted from all eternity. Thus the plum-pudding is fugitive:—("Yea," quoth Crambe, "if it be a good one,")—but the bowl wherein it was made remaineth, and becometh the prototype of future puddings. And although I can easily tell where the foresaid bowl hath its abode (namely on the shelf above the kitchen chimney), yet can I not so clearly point out the residence of other specific forms. But wherever that may be, according to them were all individual things created;—men, horses, and dogs, houses and churches, beds, stools, and chairs, puddings, and syllabubs: and in these individuals do their respective forms subsist, without multiplication or division." "Then surely," quoth Crambe, "they admit of other rules of arithmetic, as addition and subtraction, for one man hath a hunch on his back, and another wanteth a leg." "These," replied Cornelius, "are only accidents." "By no means," said Crambe, "men come so from their mother's womb."

Said Martin, "A *tailor* is a species of the genus *homo*. Now, how could the specific form of a tailor subsist, before there were clothes to shape?" "Pooh!" cried Cornelius, "how can you ask such a simple question? The specific forms of the clothes subsisted along with that of the tailor." "And do you suppose," quoth Crambe, "that the specific form of a tailor hath been clipping out the specific forms of breeches and doublets from the eldest of Time?" "Certainly,"



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said Cornelius. "No wonder then," rejoined Crambe, "at the change of our fashions. Methinks there may be forms enough cut out to serve us to the end of the world."

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## X. THE PATRIOT PASSION—VINCENTIO DELLAMBRA.

Vincit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido.
VIRG.

No product here the barren hills afford
But man and steel,—the soldier and his sword.
GOLDSMITH.

WHEN I was in Italy, many years ago, I felt a strong desire to visit the little Republic of San Marino; of which an account is given by Addison, and other British travellers. I accordingly struck across the country, while in the Pope's territories, and mounting the Apennines, proceeded towards the shores of the Adriatic, near which San Marino is situated. The dominion of this free state extends only over a single mountain, on which the metropolis stands, with a few smaller hills in the neighbourhood.

Before I had got clear of the Apennines, the evening began to close upon me, and I was forced to stop for the night at a little bleak hamlet on the eastern declivity of that range of mountains. The situation was high, and in a clear day commanded a prospect almost as far as San Marino. The good people of the



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inn were little accustomed to guests remaining all night, and were not well prepared for it; but as I travelled without state, and am not over nice in my notions of accommodation, I soon reconciled myself to taking up my quarters here. I therefore left my charioteer to dispose of his light chaise, and couple of mules, as well as he could, and followed mine host into the best apartment. There was not indeed much choice, as the only other room in the house was occupied by the poor man himself, his wife, and children; with some rabbits, tame pigeons, and poultry; all of whom seemed to form a common family. The man and his wife had both been handsome, though their features bore the marks of early hardship and labour; but in the cherub faces of the children, I thought I could recognise the lovely studies of Correggio. As it was late in autumn, and the weather getting cold, I had a fire kindled with all speed, and desired that they might bring me supper. There was no great luxury of fare; but they set before me eggs, chesnuts, milk, cheese, rye-bread, and small wine; by the help of which, and a bright fire, I contrived to bring myself into a state of tolerable endurance.

After finishing my meal, I cast my eyes about the chamber, which I found, from a bed in one corner, was to be my dormitory as well as eating-room. Though the walls were only of clay, there had been some attempts at whitewashing within; and the light from the chimney, assisted by a small lamp which stood on the table, gave the whole an air of cheerfulness. On looking further, I discovered a wooden clock

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at one end of the room, near which hung a rosary and crucifix. On the other side an ancient sword, arquebuse, and buckler, were crossed on the wall, round which were disposed festoons of bird's eggs of various colours. Several strings of onions hung from the roof to dry, which a guest of more delicate organs might have quarrelled with; but the first vigour of their scent being abated, I did not care to disturb the order of the family. The ornament, however, which most drew my attention was an oil picture over the chimney, representing a man and woman, with two children. Their dress and appearance was that of the common peasants of the country, though of ancient date; but the man's hand rested on the hilt of a sword, at the same time that it held a small lanthorn; the woman had in her's a crucifix. Their other hands were placed each on the head of one of the children. The design was stiff, and the whole performance that of an unpractised hand; but there was an expression thrown into the man's air and countenance which, notwithstanding the meanness of his dress, was interesting, and even noble.

I called in mine host, before going to bed, to make inquiries about my journey of the following day. When I mentioned my purpose of visiting San Marino, he told me that he was a native of that republic, and still continued to be one of its citizens, though he resided beyond the territory. I said that I had come so far out of my way only to see it, as I respected its ancient wisdom, independence, and public virtue. His eyes sparkled at this compliment; but before he could make a proper reply, I happened to look towards the



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picture above the chimney, and asked him what it meant. "Ah, Signor," said he, "that is our hero."—"What hero?" returned I:—"That, so please you, is our own brave hero, *Vincentio Dellambra.*"—"You know, friend," replied I, "that I am a stranger, and have little acquaintance with things here. Sit down, therefore, and taste your own wine, and tell me about this Vincentio Dellambra."

Mine host, after some respectful scruples, seated himself on the other side of the little table, filled out a glass of wine, trimmed the lamp, and made a short pause of recollection; then turning to me with a look, which at once expressed his pleasure in the recital, and his fears of not doing it justice, he began as follows:—

### STORY OF VINCENTIO DELLAMBRA.

"I need not inform you, Signor, that our Republic of San Marino was founded by our patron saint above a thousand years ago; and under the blessing of Providence, and the protection of our Holy Father the Pope, has continued free and unconquered ever since. There was a time, however, when it had a sore struggle to maintain its independence. In the year 1507;—the very year before the *League of Cambray* was formed against the Venetians;—those wicked and ambitious traders, not satisfied with their own ample dominions, and great riches, resolved to possess themselves of the port of Rimini, and of our little mountain and its territory. With this view, they made warlike preparations; giving out that it was their design to attack the Turks

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in Cyprus; but after steering some time down the Adriatic, they suddenly turned their galleys towards our shore; and landing near Rimini, took that place, after a desperate and bloody resistance. All who opposed them were put to the sword, and the town given up to fire and pillage.

"Those fearful tidings soon reached our town of San Marino, which is not more than three leagues distant. Some fugitives from Rimini having passed through our state, warned the citizens to prepare for defence, as the Venetians, in the pride and fury of their conquest, had openly declared their designs against us. Our whole people were quickly put in motion. Cattle and forage were collected from the neighbouring country; warlike stores laid in; the fortifications repaired; the ditches cleared and deepened; a courier despatched to Rome for assistance; the young men drawn out to military exercise; the old men, women, and children employed in needful works within the town; every one was active, and full of courage; and seemed to think that the safety of all depended on him alone.

"Among many brave and zealous, none was so much distinguished as Vincentio Dellambra. He was owner of a few acres of ground near the foot of the mountain, which he cultivated with his own hands, and where he lived happily with his wife Agnes, and his two little children Mark and Vincent, the same as you see in that picture. He was then twenty-nine years of age, and though without experience of war, yet he had been trained to arms like the other youth

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of the republic, and his spirit and activity now lent fire to them all. He sent his wife and children into the town, and laboured night and day in helping on the works, or in teaching the young men their military duties.

"Besides the principal town of San Marino, which stands on the highest mountain, we have two other places well fortified, on the lower hills in the neighbourhood, one of which is important as commanding the spring of water which supplies the town. On both of these places, particularly the last, great pains were bestowed, as well to protect the spring of water, as to form an outwork for the town on that side. Several of the citizens, having formerly served with the different powers of Italy, knew something of military practice, and undertook the strengthening of this place, as well as the general command of our forces.

"The enemy had been delayed some days by their operations on the coast, which gave us a little time to prepare. They now advanced, however, with all their strength; and our people venturing to make a sally beyond their outworks, suffered great loss, though they fought bravely, being overpowered by numbers. On all those occasions Vincentio was the foremost; performed deeds of incredible valour; and received many wounds; yet still kept his heart and spirits undismayed.

"But all those efforts were vain. The enemy, by their numbers and skill, gradually gained ground, though every inch was disputed with furious combats.

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They got possession of the outworks; cut off the supply of water; hemmed in the town from all communication; and began to erect works, on a rising ground, in front of our chief fortification, from which a breach might be made in the walls, and our town taken by storm.

"The attack had now lasted seven days; and the unfortunate people, shut up within the town, were reduced to the utmost extremities. Their number was greater than that of the ordinary inhabitants, as many from the country had taken refuge there; while the want of provisions and water caused a dreadful suffering. Besides this, a great part of the town was overthrown or burnt, by balls, shells, and other means of destruction. The courier despatched to Rome had been intercepted, on his return, by the light parties of the enemy; and it was now resolved to send off another. The occasion was urgent, as the enemy's works advanced apace; our people were too weak to give them any serious interruption; and when they had reached so high that cannon could be brought to bear on the walls, all further defence was hopeless.

"Amidst these evils, Vincentio was the chief support of his countrymen; enduring all with cheerfulness, encouraging others to hope, and watchful over every motion of the enemy. In the intervals of his labour, or at his hasty meals, he would steal home to his wife and children, whom he had lodged with his brother in the town. Poor Agnes, who entirely loved him, and who had more of the woman than the heroine in her constitution, used to press him to some intermission of

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his fatigues and dangers; but he always made light of them, and broke from her to resume his station on the ramparts."

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## XI. STORY OF VINCENTIO DELLAMBRA—*concluded.*

Manibus date lilia plenis;
Purpureos spargam flores.....et fungar inani
Munere. VIRG.

"AT the foot of the mountain where the town of San Marino stands," continued mine host, "there was a small redoubt, which had, even at that time, fallen into ruin, and of which scarcely any vestige now remains. It was the outlet of a subterraneous passage leading up to the town, which had been dug in a winding course through the softer parts of the hill, and, where it came near the surface, had been continued by masonry turfed over. This passage having been long disused, was filled up at the bottom with rubbish from the decayed redoubt, and by being concealed in this way, had escaped the notice of the enemy. The second messenger despatched to Rome had got out at this opening; and some of those who had assisted in clearing away the rubbish, perceived that the enemy's works were at no great distance. Among others there present was Julio Gotti, a skilful engineer, who had been long in the service of the Genoese. Favoured by the darkness, he measured and observed, as well as he could, the space between the mouth of this passage and the works of the enemy. Though these were built on a small hill, he ascertained that it was of too soft

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materials, to resist the force of gunpowder. He therefore conceived the project of driving a mine towards the works, and blowing them up.

" This plan he forthwith laid before the Council of Sixty. Some objected the difficulty; others the danger which the town would run from the explosion; but these scruples were got over, and it was resolved to set about the work without delay. The design was, however, kept secret, lest it might occasion fears among the citizens, or be suspected by the enemy. A band of miners was chosen from among the most vigorous of the young men, who were placed under the charge of Gotti and Vincentio; and, relieving each other by turns, worked without ceasing. The toil of carrying the earth by the covered passage up to the town was extreme; but they were forced to do so, for fear of discovery by the besiegers. In the course of four days and nights, they completed their access to the works of the enemy, and formed a large chamber under the very centre of the hillock. Two other days were employed in finishing the mine, and in carrying gunpowder to this subterranean excavation.

" But an unfortunate hindrance arose, which threatened to render all their labour fruitless. The mine had remained dry for several days, during which all the preparations had been finished; but now moisture began to appear, and soon laid a great part of it under water. To this was soon added a huge fissure in the ground, which sunk towards the chamber where the ammunition lay; insomuch that it required a full hour, with considerable risk of drowning, for the strongest

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man to reach the chamber. But all retreat was impossible. The depth of the water; the crumbling nature of the soil; the ascent to be scaled; all combined to prevent it;—at least within time to leave any chance of escape from the explosion. To sum up the difficulties, moisture had so far accumulated above, below, and around, that neither fuse nor train would burn; and the only chance of an explosion was by thrusting fire into the very heart of the gunpowder.

"In this dilemma the Council met on the evening of the fifteenth day since the beginning of the attack. The people now suffered the extremities of hunger, and the town was in many places reduced to ruins; while the batteries of the besiegers being completed, waited only till next day to be opened against the walls, when all the horrors of assault and pillage seemed to be inevitable. On the other hand, could our people have succeeded in destroying the enemy's works, they had reason to hope for timely succours from Rome, their second messenger having returned with assurances of help. But this hope was now at an end, by the disaster which had happened in the mine. Gotti had exhausted all his art to repair it, but in vain. Even had time been allowed for digging a new mine, there was reason to fear that a similar accident would render it useless.

"The Council remained in silent despondency. At length Vincentio, who was present, addressing the engineer, said, 'Julio, do you think that the gunpowder in the inner chamber is still dry?' 'In the centre it is,' replied Gotti, 'for I myself penetrated thi-

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ther, and examined it.' 'And were fire applied, would it still do its task?' 'It would so, assuredly,' said Gotti; 'but whence can the fire come, unless Heaven send its own?' 'Heaven may send something as good,' cried Vincentio,—'a hand to carry it; and for that service I offer mine.' 'You never can return,' said Gotti. 'I know the condition,' answered Vincentio.

"A murmur of applause, mingled with pity and hesitation, ran through the Council. Some proposed to try the chance of another day. But Vincentio stopped them. 'Speak not,' said he, 'of another day. You know it would be fatal. Before night, your town would be stormed, and yourselves enslaved. I can never die so well as in this glorious cause. Allow me but an hour to see my wife and children:—But keep my secret from them:—I could not withstand their tears. And as I give my life for you all, to you I bequeath the care of them.'

"It was now growing late, and Vincentio returned to take supper with his family. His unhappy wife, long accustomed to alarms, had sunk into a sort of gloomy acquiescence; and Vincentio so commanded himself at this interview, that nothing escaped to raise her suspicion. She only noticed that he did not caress the little boys as usual, for he was afraid to trust himself. As she brought them up to kiss him, before putting them to bed, the tears came into his eyes, and his voice choked; but he hid his face in the embraces of his children. He soon afterwards recovered himself; joined with his wife and brother in evening

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prayer; and kissing her with a steady countenance, took leave in his usual manner, as if to repair to the ramparts. Her last words were to remind him to return early in the morning.

"My recollection of these things, Signor, may appear strangely minute; but this story is instilled into us in our tenderest years, as a lesson and example of what we owe our country.

"Vincentio then confessed himself, and received absolution. The holy father blessed him, and the righteous act of self-devotion which he was about to accomplish.

"It being now midnight, he was accompanied by Gotti, and one or two others, to the ruined redoubt, where the mine began. They entered the mine, and proceeded together till they reached the brink of the gulf, where the floor had given way. Vincentio threw off his cloak, and embracing his companions, one by one, solemnly bade them farewell. He then took his lanthorn, and began his difficult descent towards the surface of the water. Then clinging to the side of the mine with both hands, while the lanthorn was held in his teeth, and deep immersed in the water, he slowly struggled on, till at length it shallowed so far that he could reach the bottom with his feet. Then labouring through the tenacious mud, and holding the lanthorn above his head in one hand, they at length saw him nearly across the water, when a turn of the mine hid him from their view. He had wasted near an hour in this painful progress. It had been agreed that he should shout in token of safety, when

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he reached the chamber where the gunpowder lay. The others waited till they heard his voice, to which they replied; and then hastened up the mountain, to avoid a danger which could be of no use.

"They soon reached the town, and went to the Council, which was still sitting. A dreadful pause ensued of about a quarter of an hour; from which delay it was conjectured that Vincentio had found the gunpowder partly moistened; or had met with some other obstacle to his purpose. At length a terrific crash was heard, and the concussion as of an earthquake shook the whole mountain. The night was dark, but the flash of the explosion illuminated all around; and stones, and beams of burning timber, and heavy cannon torn from their carriages, and mangled limbs and bodies of men, were seen scattered in the air. The people, ignorant of the design, rushed into the streets in consternation, thinking that their town was destroyed. By degrees they were reassured—a thick smoke and strong smell of gunpowder succeeded—a confused noise of bustle, and shouts, and groans, was heard from the quarter of the enemy—and a rumour began to spread that their works were overthrown.

"Our people were too weak to attempt following up this advantage during the night; but waited in anxious suspense the return of day, which discovered the full success of the operation. The works, which it had taken a fortnight to erect, were a heap of ruins; and several hundred men, who had been stationed there, were wounded or slain. The Venetians remained two

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days undecided; when accounts arriving of the approach of succours from his Holiness the Pope, they broke up their encampment, retreated to the coast, and embarked with all their powers.

"The wife of Vincentio had run out, like others, on the alarm of the explosion, and heard of the blowing up of the enemy's works, but still without any thought of her husband's danger; and knowing it vain to seek him amidst the confusion, she had returned home. After the first tumult had abated, it was thought good that one of the senators should carry her the sad tidings. He found her sitting at the bedside of her children, who had been awakened by the noise; and telling them the good news of their delivery from the cruel Venetians; and listening to their eager questions, and artless wonder. The story of her husband's fate fell upon her like the hand of death. She neither wept nor spoke. Her children's tears, and cries, and caresses, moved her not. The counsels of religion, the entreaties of her kindred, were alike in vain. She lay, during three days, placid but motionless. She kissed and blessed her children; but when any one spoke of comfort, she closed her eyes, and gently shook her head.

"After the enemy had retreated, men were set to dig through the ruins into the chamber where the gunpowder had been stored, to look for some remains of poor Vincentio's body. Contrary to expectation, it was found entire, though dismally scorched and blackened; for being lower than the ammunition when he applied the flame, and the explosion breaking through

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upwards, he had escaped its chief fury. He was brought up, and exposed to his mourning countrymen. His wife, who was yet alive, insisted on seeing the body. She gazed upon it for a few moments; then closed her eyes with a convulsive gasp; and never spoke again. She soon after breathed her last, pressing to her bosom a crucifix, which had been the marriage gift of her husband.

The faithful pair were placed together in the same coffin, and buried in one grave. The citizens in tears attended the funeral procession; the two little boys of Vincentio walking between the chief senators: and many privileges were conferred on them by their grateful countrymen, which are enjoyed by their descendants to this day."

As my worthy host ended his narrative, tears of pride and pity were glistening on his cheek. I could not but sympathize in his honest feelings; and thanking him for his story, wished him good night.

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## XII. MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

Justa et clemens servitus.
TER.

THIS is about the time when people are changing their servants. In passing along the streets, you see little knots of footmen whispering together, with much interest in their looks, and comparing notes of their situations or prospects. In some, you can trace the satisfaction of a snug place, and high wages,—in others

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disappointment or suspense,—while a third class, who make no change at all, stand with a tranquil neutrality between the two, though taking some concern in the fortunes of their brethren. In such colloquies there is little doubt that the characters of many persons and families are submitted to a pretty free scrutiny;—that matters of private history are commented on, and foibles or frailties portrayed, with a colouring which differs from that of the drawing-room rather in delicacy than in strength. It is an old saying, that no one is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre*; and whatever success a man may have in keeping a fair reputation among his equals, he will find it no easy matter to satisfy his servants.

The present conjuncture has put me on making a few remarks concerning this important relation in society; and methinks I already hear the higher classes of my readers, male and female, congratulate themselves on my purpose of giving a due chastisement to the knavery, unreasonableness, and insolence of servants. I will promise nothing. Let them read on, and they will see the event.

The condition of a house-servant has the misfortune to be looked on somewhat hardly, both by those above and those below it. Their masters, who have a near feeling of their faults, are not over charitable in their estimate. While the common labouring orders regard them as unduly advanced above their sphere; and envy their good fare, fine clothes, easy work, and intercourse with their superiors. A footman in a splendid livery, or a groom as well booted and mounted as his master, figures as a being of high

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order in the vulgar sight; and the habit of hearing the conversation, and mingling in the affairs and amusements of their masters, at races, reviews, and so forth, gives them a tone of fashion and superiority not easily digested by their equals in birth. These last accordingly revenge themselves by every vituperative reflection on the meanness and slavery of servants; and it has been remarked, from time immemorial, that in mobs and riots, and all other manifestations of the MAJESTY OF THE PEOPLE, that many-headed sovereign expresses his displeasure, with peculiar energy, against this class of his liege subjects.

As to the opinion, again, which masters and mistresses usually form of their servants, I have observed, that in their reasonings, a small postulate is assumed, which greatly helps out their conclusion,—namely,—that in all differences between them, the utmost reasonableness, forbearance, and magnanimity prevails on their part, which is balanced with a just equipollent of the opposite qualities in their servants. And doubtless if this trifle be conceded, it abridges and winds up the whole argument in a very satisfactory manner. Accordingly, the *plague*, and *annoyance*, and *torture* of servants, are among the standing topics which are admitted as too clear for dispute in all good company. We must, however, call to mind the fable of the Man and the Lion, and inquire how the picture would stand under an opposite representation. In the present case, indeed, as I already hinted, the lion does now and then attempt a little sketch, though before a



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different assembly; and I suspect that the topics of the kitchen and servants' hall are as much settled in the one way, as those of the higher regions in the other. In my character of an impartial Censor, I must endeavour to do justice to both.

I set out then with boldly maintaining, that the causes of trouble and disagreement in this relation of life are nearly as much owing to the master as to the servant. Indeed, in my experience of the world, I cannot say that I have ever known a good master habitually troubled with bad servants: And I always take it for what the lawyers call *prima facie* evidence against a man's understanding or temper, that he is given to changing his servants. Persons in the upper ranks of life would do well to consider the advantages which they have enjoyed over their inferiors, in education and society; and how much more they are bound to shew an example of mildness, reasonableness, and superiority to petty feelings. On the contrary, one would imagine from the conduct of many towards their servants, that they held the privilege of their rank to consist in indulging every ebullition of caprice and ill-humour; while their servants were expected, in return for their wages, to exhibit a compendium of the cardinal virtues. This, to say the least of it, indicates no very equitable or generous turn of mind.

I am old-fashioned enough to think, that a man cannot with decency reproach his servant for faults which he indulges in himself. Yet you shall see one gentleman freely use his bottle, who turns off

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his servant for getting drunk; another who kills many horses by hard riding, yet is scandalized if his groom be detected in a canter; and a third, who will daily send his footman for a snuff-box, watch, or pocket-handkerchief, which his negligence has left behind, and yet will lecture the same footman, with edifying solemnity, on the smallest forgetfulness or omission in his domestic duties.

That servants are free from failings, any more than their masters, I am far from maintaining. They are, like other men, at times negligent, stupid, headstrong, drunken, saucy, inconstant, quarrelsome; not to mention faults of a still graver dye; and in large establishments, it is often more difficult to keep them on good terms with one another, than with their masters. But it scarcely ever happens, that any fault in a servant can justify a master in abuse or scolding. A proper sense of his own dignity ought to keep him from this; and for the amendment of the servant, a calm rebuke, stating the consequences of repeating the offence, with a steady enforcement of those consequences, is far more likely to succeed. Neither can I overlook a certain habit of small gibing and fretfulness which some really good people use towards their domestics. This is not a demeanour likely to insure respect from them; and its display before strangers is (I must whisper) one of the greatest breaches of good manners.

There is an error of an opposite kind into which some masters and mistresses fall, that of an over indulgent and gossipping familiarity with their servants. This either ends in the servant gaining an



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improper ascendency, or in a total rupture, on the master attempting to repress what he had before encouraged. The picture of Justice Shallow and his man Davy, has been caught with that infallible truth of observation which allowed no corner of life or nature to escape, and retains the resemblance through all forms and changes of society: "They, by observing him, do bear themselves like foolish Justices; he, by conversing with them, is turned into a Justice-like-serving-man." This extreme makes as bad a servant as the other; but still it is the master who is to blame.

There is yet another sort of demeanour towards servants which I cannot approve of; though, as growing out of a right habit, and erring only by excess, it is difficult to say where the good ends and the bad begins. In a word, reserve and dignity may be carried too far; and a person who will not condescend to be angry, and far less to be familiar, may maintain such a freezing distance, such a total incommunity of thought and feeling in regard to his servants, as seems to imply that they are beings of a different nature from himself, and is more hard to bear than direct ill-usage. When Mr Anson the traveller arrived at home from the East, the servant who had accompanied him came to ask his dismissal. On the reason being demanded, he said, he had nothing to complain of, but that, through all their common toils and dangers, his master had never addressed a word to him but in the way of command. This might arise from mere forgetfulness, or awkwardness of temper, in the master; but to the servant it had all the effects of

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pride: And one who thinks that such feelings merit no regard; and that fidelity and attachment are compensated by wages; I must say, does not deserve to find such qualities in a servant. It should also be remembered, that, even in conveying an order, a slight difference of tone or language, makes all the distinction between kindness and contempt. The French soldier, when asked why he preferred his old to his new colonel, could assign no other reason, than that, in giving the word of command, the one said, *Allons mes enfans*,—the other, *Allez mes enfans*.

It is on the above considerations, among others, that I disapprove of Miss Edgeworth's plan of education, in so far as it forbids all intercourse between children and servants. Could such estrangement even be carried into effect, it would lead us to regard our domestics as a separate and inferior race of beings, having nothing in common with ourselves; a turn of mind unjust towards them, and far from advantageous to us. Undoubtedly their intercourse with children should be carefully watched, to avoid the dangers pointed out by Miss Edgeworth; but it cannot be, and ought not to be, altogether prevented.

Nothing is more possible than to unite a dignity sufficient to insure respect, with a condescension and kindness which softens the inequalities of fortune, and sometimes meets with generous returns. Amidst the horrors of the French revolution, we are somewhat reconciled to our common nature by the examples of courage, and sagacity, and heroic attachment, shewn by servants towards their ruined and per-

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secuted masters. I am doubtful if such instances would have been so frequent here, in a similar crisis; because I am doubtful if we deserve them so well. I believe there is in general more kindness and ease in the intercourse between masters and servants in that country than in our own. The "morgue aristocratique," which Bonaparte imputed to the English, is a charge not without some foundation. This failing, however, I believe, arises in part from our free institutions. Where the law makes no distinction of rights, the higher classes are disposed to repel incroachment by a cold and distant behaviour.

But in hopes that no occasion may arise with us of giving such intrepid proofs of fidelity as occurred among our Gallic neighbours, let me return to the cases of daily occurrence,—and remark, that a frequent cause of neglect in servants, is a want of reflection, steadiness, and consistency, in the orders which they receive. This imperfection, I am afraid, is as often seen in the more amiable half of the creation, as in our sex; but when we consider the weighty concerns which press on the attention of a lady embarked in the whirlpool of a winter's engagements, we must allow for a little want of sorting in such a mass. The effect, however, is not the less sure of putting the servant's patience to some trial, and inspiring him with a distrust of the infallibility of his superiors; besides teaching certain habits of neglect and disobedience by no means consistent with a dutiful service. But indeed the orders and counter-orders issued in certain families do neutralize each other so fast, that a ser-

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vant, if he manage discreetly, may, like a body impelled by opposite forces, remain pretty much at rest on the whole. What I would recommend to masters and mistresses, in the view of securing an exact and willing obedience, is to think a little before giving an order, and not rashly to change it.

I happened to call, the other morning, on a fair widow, who is at the head of our *beau monde*, young, handsome, and agreeable. I found her in a circle of fashionable persons of both sexes; and, in spite of my plain habit and manners, was received by her with the polite cordiality of an old acquaintance. The conversation turned on the *wild beasts* lately arrived: a gentleman was very eloquent in praise of a *white bear:* and it was straightway agreed to pay them a visit. The bell was rung; the footman appeared; and instructions were given to tell John to get the carriage immediately. I happened to sit near a window which overlooked the court-yard and stables. I saw the footman come out into the back area; but instead of going with his message, he quietly threw off his livery coat, and resumed his task of washing bottles. I had hardly completed this observation, when, turning again to the company, I found that the stream of discourse had flowed into a new channel; the wild beasts were out of date; and it was resolved *nem. con.* to take an airing on horseback; several of the gentlemen having their horses in waiting. The footman was again summoned. "We shan't want the carriage, but tell Dick to bring round *Sprightly* and *Cowslip* with side-saddles;—and, stay—do you, Tom, run, and

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inquire how poor Mrs *Bulse* rested after losing her necklace." Dick being below, this message reached its destination; and accordingly he was soon after to be seen approaching leisurely to the stables, with one boot on, and one shoe,—the other boot being twirled on the handle of his whip. As to Mrs *Bulse*, her concerns gave way to an order for washing and combing little Pompey. There was forthwith a general chase after him, during which he displayed a *tactic* not unworthy of his great namesake; and finally eluded his pursuers, by taking post under the sofa. Dick, after a due interval, appeared with the horses; but by this time it was settled, that so fine a day should not be lost for a walk to see the *camera obscura*, in the Observatory on the Calton Hill. It was accordingly notified to Dick, that he should put up his horses, and proceed, with all dispatch, to inquire if the *camera obscura* was visible. He had, however, grown wiser by experience; and having disposed of his cattle, sat down to smoke a pipe at the stable-window, which lasted till long after the affair of the Observatory was passed away and forgotten. What other designs were taken up, or laid down—orders given and retracted—messages reversed, varied, or amended—I am far from pretending to enumerate; only I can affirm, that pending my visit of ordinary endurance, the footman presented himself seven times, and received twice as many orders; none of which, that I could see, led to any practical result, except one to mend the fire.

For my own part, whatever other faults I may have, I hold myself tolerably clear in this regard. I

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scarcely know what it is to have a bad servant. I change them very seldom, and most of those now in my family, have grown old with myself. In this way, a mutual regard has arisen, which I believe to be equally sincere on both sides. Almost the sole occasion of their ever leaving me, has been to get into some better way of life; which I have always taken pleasure in promoting; and have had no small satisfaction in their prosperity and gratitude. The only one who ever left me after a short service, was the son of a tenant of my own, named Thomas Williams; but the particulars of his story I must reserve for another occasion.

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## XIII. MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

Ditis examen domus.
HOR.

MY paper on the subject of domestic servants, has procured me a good many correspondents; and, as usually happens in matters of grave concernment, my notions have been received with very different degrees of favour and assent. The genteeler class of my disciples are out of all patience at my taking part, as they will have it, with the insolence of servants. Many a gilt and wire-wove billet have I received, wondering that a person of my knowledge of the world can be so unreasonable; and assuring me, that the most undeviating propriety of conduct on their part meets with

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nothing but ill returns from the sunk floor. There are other manuscripts, again, which have reached me, on scanty paper, and in an orthography somewhat arbitrary, which insinuate (under favour) that I have let off the *gentles* too well; and hint, that if I saw what doings went on in their family, I would come to another guess way of thinking. Amidst this contrariety, however, I have had the satisfaction of one or two moderate epistles, approving of my sentiments in general; and agreeing with me, that although there commonly are faults on both sides, the means of amendment lie chiefly within the power of the masters.

The truth is, that this relation of life, whether well or ill conducted, is so indispensable; and, whatever may be a man's philosophy, intrudes so often on his domestic quiet; that we are forced to think of it, whether we will or no; and are all more or less interested in its amendment. I will, therefore, without further preface, lay before my readers some of the letters which I have received on the present subject.

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—I cannot but agree with you in thinking that much of the ill conduct of servants is owing to the fault of their masters; and of these faults I take the most general and injurious to be, the want of a steady superintendence, and the early checking of small irregularities. This, sir, is what we are all the better of, in our several stations; and the greatest temptation which either man or woman can be exposed to, is the opportunity of sinning without detection.

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The habits of luxurious and fashionable life, have led to a neglect and estrangement between masters and their servants, which has destroyed all community of feeling between them; and has taken from the latter at once the shame of doing ill, and the pride of doing well. The master receives their services coldly, as what he has paid for. They consider all the trouble they can spare themselves, as so much gained. From a grudging or carelessness of doing right, it is but a short step to doing wrong.

"The same remark has, with some justice, been extended to the relations between the higher and lower classes of society in general. The former have, by degrees, separated themselves from the latter, so far, in their residences, their hours, their habits, their places of worship, and, in short, in the whole system and economy of life,—that there is less of that connexion and cordial feeling between them than there used to be in a simpler state of society,—less of that interchange of benefit and gratitude,—less of that mutual acquaintance and sympathy,—and consequently less of that control of advice and example, which the rich formerly exercised over the poor. The lower classes have sometimes been called the Children of the State: and it appears to me that their treatment should in some measure resemble that which we use towards children; constant and calm inspection, and steady control, mingled with kindness of manner:—little deference to their judgment, but much concern for their welfare.

"But to return to my more proper subject: Me-

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thinks I hear your fashionable readers exclaim,—'What! Are we to plague ourselves, and throw away our time, in superintending our servants? The thing is intolerable—impossible!' Is it so? answer I; that is unlucky. But then, I am not quite clear that it is fair to complain of the consequences. There is a maxim of the civil law, 'Qui vult quod antecedit, non debet nolle quod consequitur;' which may be rendered thus, (for the benefit of the country gentlemen,) *He that takes his bottle at night must take his headach in the morning.*

"For my part, I cannot imagine a more becoming occupation for the mistress of a family, than a reasonable superintendence of her domestic establishment, including the conduct of her servants. This will be recommended to a good mind by the consideration, that it is even more for their advantage than her own. If done with calmness, good sense, and regularity; and kept free from a paltry minuteness; it may be practised without in the least lowering the proper dignity of her sex or station. To good servants it will be rather acceptable, and it will often prevent the doubtful from going astray.

"There is one peculiarity in the modern habits of fashionable life, most unfavourable to the character of servants,—I mean the system of evening parties in great towns. By this practice, it may be truly said, that, for several months every winter, the greatest family establishments are permanently broken up, between the hours of ten at night, and two or three in the morning. A few of those families are giving en-

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tertainments, and all the rest attending them; and this happens night after night, without intermission. Meantime the servants, male and female, are left to themselves, for those hours, free from all inspection or inquiry. They see their superiors engaged in a constant round of dissipation, frivolous at least, if not criminal, —sacrificing every thing to a rage for amusement;— and is it to be expected that they will be more sober, diligent, or self-denying? On the contrary, what is merely dissipation in their betters, will become debauchery in them; and they may be incurably depraved, whom a regular attention, and good example, would have preserved untainted. As the lower classes of people imitate their superiors in profligacy, so they will imitate them in sobriety and restraint. Indeed, they are naturally friendly to strictness of manners; for, in this emulation, the privileges of fortune disappear, and all mankind are equal.

"I make no puritanical objection to gaieties and amusements among the rich. When indulged in with moderation, they contribute to innocent enjoyment, and refined manners. But when carried to excess, they injure the health, both of body and mind; and, in particular, are one of the chief causes of the corruption of domestic servants, of which their self-indulgent superiors are the loudest to complain. If you can persuade these last to a greater moderation in their pleasures, you will do no disservice to their families, either above or below stairs.—I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

"HONESTUS."

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"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"What a greenhorn you are, *Mr Keeper*, (as you call yourself,) in the management of servants. I am sure, whatever you *keep*, you know nothing of *keeping* them in good order. I began the world with your notions,—treated my servants kindly,—spoke gently to them,—overlooked their faults,—and gave them easy work. And what was the return? Gratitude, think you, and quiet behaviour? Quite the reverse. They were perpetually scolding and scuffling among themselves; always coming to me with complaints; and going away grumbling and growling, while they had all their hearts could desire. Well, Sir, I found this would never do, so I tried another tack. I turned them all off at once, and got a new set. Began to hector and bully like a Great Mogul; plagued them with constant work; sent them on useless errands; made them do and undo the same thing ten times a-day; rated them for the least fault; and took their best exertions sourly and thanklessly. The consequence is, that they all now join in hating and abusing me heartily, but in perfect quiet; condole with one another on their oppressions; live like lambs together; and I am, out of all question, the best served man in the parish.—Yours, "JOSEPH TROUNC'EM."

"P. S.—I never keep one above six months, on any account. Of all nuisances in a family, there is nothing like your *old and faithful servant*."

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"TO SIR KEEPER AND HIS CABINET.

"SIR KEEPER,—I'm sure, Sir, if you'd but know'd how our family goes on, you'd say as how poor servants was abused in a way you never see'd the like in a Christian country. Here must I be up early, and down late;—out at all hours, day and night, after madam and the young ladies;—and then if I but lie a bit in the morning, I'm abused all to smoke. And if we ever touch but a drop of drink, if it be but a sneaker or so to keep out the cold, there's such a fuss, and such a to-do, and all for nothing at all; and yet master will sit drinking with his companies till all hours of the night; and Mr George and Mr Harry will give one as much bad talk, if there be but a spot on their boots, or their pantaloons; and Mr Sideboard the butler is worst of all. If your honour was in want of a foot-boy, I would be proud to serve your honour, who is so good to your servants; for I sometimes see your paper as I am doing up the rooms of a morning; and please to say what wages you would be agreeable to give, besides tea and washing. I served in very genteel families in our town, before I came up here, such as Deacon Tallow, and Mr Wash of the Excise, besides six months at the *Cross Keys*, where all the quality come on market-days.—Being all from your honour's loving servant to command,

"NIC. FAG."

"FOR THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"The Countess of Erminetail's regards wait on the Keeper of the Cabinet. She signifies her surprise that

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he should give such improper encouragement to servants, who occasion so much trouble in genteel families. It would be unbecoming in a person of her ladyship's rank to descend to particulars; but she informs him that he is mistaken. Her ladyship expects that he will express himself, for the future, in a more guarded manner; otherwise she will be under the unpleasant necessity of withdrawing her countenance from his paper."

"FOR MISTER KEEPER.

"MISTER KEEPER.—I really wonder Mister Keeper, and it is a matter surpriseable to me, how you can talk in so easy a way of the hard usage of poor servants, especially ladies' maids. You have really, sir, no notion how unreasonable some people are. There is Miss Starchly, as I live with just now, she is so troublesome, and so *pertikler*, and so fanciful about her dress, and so cross and frumpish with me; and in short, sir, I don't know how it is, but some people will never be satisfied with other people that look younger and better than themselves. And then, sir, if she catches me doing up the least matter for myself, or if I but go out to take a cup of tea with a friend, she flies out, sir, and flounces at such a rate, as you have no notion. But I said to her the other day, Really, mem, says I, you are so hard to please, says I, and so out of the way, mem, says I, that I, really, mem, do not know what to do, says I. With that, sir, she flew out, and called me such names, as you never heard the like, sir, in all your born days; and I was thrown

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into such a tremble, and such a taking, and so *nervish*, Sir, as it were, that I was not myself the whole day after. I beg you will touch a little more on this matter, and oblige,—Yours in a civil way,

"MARY WHITE-SEAM."

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"MR KEEPER.—The long and the short of the matter is, (whatever you may say to the contrary), that servants, nowadays, are absolutely past enduring.—The men are a parcel of lazy, insolent, pampered dogs; and as for the women, the young ones fall into love, and the old ones into drink; so that, one way or other, they are all alike. I beg, Sir, for a little of your good advice on this subject, and remain,—Yours, &c.

"TIM. CRUSTY."

Seriously, my friend Mr Crusty's case is to be pitied; nor can I, in such an extremity, think of any other course for him, but to serve himself.



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## XIV. A GOOD SORT OF A MAN.

Vir bonus est quis?
HOR.

"THIS Lady," says M. Grimm, speaking of Madame Denis, the niece of Voltaire, "whom her residence with her uncle has rendered so well known, is the widow of a Commissary. Heaven created her without talents, and gave her a soul truly plebeian, with an allowance of all suitable qualities. She is what is usually called *a good sort of a woman*,—a denomination implying the possession of no real virtue or accomplishment." This denomination, I must observe, however, in justice to the fair sex, is by no means confined to them; as we have, in ours, a variety of the species called *a good sort of man*, resembling, in all its attractive features, the sketch above given.

My worthy friend Mr Steerwell is a favourable specimen of this variety. He is a single man, now somewhat past the middle of life, and being born to a tolerable patrimony, has never followed any profession. His fortune, as he is exceedingly careful, has increased under his stewardship, and has never been impaired either by adventure or generosity. He mixes a good deal with the world; but this, as he contrives it, tends to economy rather than expense. He seldom ventures decided opinions on any subject, but is particularly reserved on those which agitate or divide mankind. He has very level spirits, and is never seen out of temper in ordinary society. It is alleged

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that he reserves all his animation for an occasional bluster against his servants, or to beat down his tradesmen's bills: but in such cases his zeal turns to some profit. He is punctual in paying visits; attentive in making inquiries when any one is sick; will bring the young ladies a new pattern from *La belle Assemblée;* secure a pointer puppy for the young gentlemen; assist mamma in making up her ball party, or papa in tasting his wine: in short, is generally allowed to be *a mighty good sort of a man, who gives offence to nobody.*

Mr Steerwell has a handsome well furnished house, suitable to his fortune. Nothing makes him happier than to see his friends there of a forenoon. He will often press them, after a saunter in the street, to take a glass of wine, and bit of cold meat with him; but somehow his housekeeper always happens to be abroad with the keys. I have heard him threaten to turn off that unlucky housekeeper any time these ten years, but I found her still *abroad* when I called there last week. He is much at other people's houses himself, and hears what engagements are going on; but it is remarked that he has always the ill-luck to invite his friends to dinner when they are otherwise disposed of. If any friend from the country is here for a few days, his house commonly happens to be painting; or he is, by the strangest accident, engaged for the whole week. All this, however, shows his kind intentions, and he is universally admitted to be a very *hospitable good sort of a man.*

Mr Steerwell is a useful man at balls and other



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public places, in taking charge of the ladies' shawls, —handing them a glass of negus,—and assisting them to their chairs when going away. He is always ready to attend his friends a-shopping, where he speaks knowingly of the prices and qualities of goods. The shopkeepers are well pleased to see him, as he promotes buying in others, though he buys nothing himself. He is a great man at all public entertainments which are given *gratis;* and is never awanting to tell where the toast stands,—to circulate the bottle,—and join in a chorus for the promotion of festivity and good humour.

In morality, Mr Steerwell may be called rather a safe than an enterprising practitioner. If he be named guardian to the children of a friend, who has died in labouring circumstances, he discovers that he has no talent for business, and would only encumber the rest:—but they have his best wishes:—his deceased friend was a worthy man, but rather scheming:—he had often advised him to caution, but in vain. If a living friend be attacked in Mr Steerwell's presence, he is not fond of meddling in disputes;—there are various ways of telling a story;—he is satisfied that things, on explanation, will turn out not so bad;—but we all have our failings. If he be applied to for a contribution in a case of peculiar calamity, he sympathises from the bottom of his heart, but really he has doubts of the advantage of giving charity;—his means are far more limited than his inclinations;—he has many nearer claims;—but wishes all success in so pious an undertaking. If any one hint his surprise at this, he

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is immediately stopped with,—"O, you may be sure Mr Steerwell has his reasons, otherwise none would be more ready, as he is such a *humane good sort of a man.*"

Nobody is more regular in his movements than Mr Steerwell. He has risen at the same hour and minute every morning, for these twenty years past. He picks up his first news of the day from his hairdresser; then breakfasts alone, and overlooks his household affairs. He sallies forth about eleven o'clock to the coffeehouses, and the courts of law, where he picks up all the intelligence that is going, public and private, in time to retail it to his fashionable friends, when they get astir from three to five. Then, sauntering through the gay streets and squares, or paying visits, he carries to the inmates of each abode, a small offering of news and scandal, which is not ungrateful even to such delicate palates; though, on such points, he manages so discreetly, by assuming the tone of mitigation and defence, as to pass for the best natured man breathing. In the other avocations of life he is equally methodical. At all places of resort, whether dinners, marriages, or funerals, you are sure to find him the first, and going through the stated forms of the place and occasion with the ease of an adept. On these last solemnities he takes his wine and cake with the utmost decorum, and clears up all difficulties among the undertakers, as to precedence and relationship. He enters his pew, twice every Sunday, at a certain stroke of the bell; and his halfpenny clinks into the plate at the church door with the same punc-

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tuality. He once surprised every body by giving a shilling, but on farther examination it was found to be a bad one.

I chanced to meet him one day, when the news had arrived of the death of a lovely young woman, his near relation, leaving a husband and infant family to bewail her loss. I spoke of this catastrophe with an emotion I could scarcely command. He joined in expressions of regret, and added as an instance of his ill-luck, that he had got home a blue coat the very day before, but hoped that the tailor would exchange it for a black. On another occasion, a common friend of ours, having been driven to despair by repeated losses, put an end to his own life. I communicated this event to Mr Steerwell, and spoke of doing something for the helpless family—"Ah, aye, my dear friend," said he, "to be sure, something must be done:—but now I think of it, he had a pair of globes that would suit my library: they might perhaps be got for a small matter in this confusion:—I will inquire about them to-night." Indeed I never knew anybody bear the distresses of his friends with greater fortitude than Mr Steerwell.

Mr Steerwell's taste in letters is of the same easy accommodating sort as his taste in morals. He reads (in the way of loan) all the new poetry and novels that come out, so as to be able to speak about them among his acquaintances. He seldom ventures on any opinion himself, but waits for that of the fashionable world, and fashionable reviews. If he finds a work fairly run down, and desperate, he will not

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scruple to repeat a small fling at it, when vouched by the authority of a Lord, or Baronet, or an approved *bel esprit;* but he rather inclines by temper to the lenient side; always, however, keeping in generals, and avoiding minute illustrations, as troublesome and dangerous. In this way, he could not fail to obtain the reputation of *solid sense*, and of being *the best natured man in the world.*

I am no advocate for extravagant sentiment, or violent impracticable virtue. Indeed, I esteem Prudence of such value in human affairs, that if I do not place her, with the Roman satirist, in the stead of all other deities,* yet I can scarcely allow any thing the name of enlightened virtue where she is wanting. But I am still far from recommending that spirit of calculation which banishes both generous sentiment and active beneficence: for it is of little consequence that we know what is right, unless we have within us a principle strong enough to impel us to perform it. In the present habits of society, this last is perhaps our chief want. We are apt to overvalue the merits of a quiet unmeddling selfishness, which retires within its shell, and hazards nothing. It is not amiss, therefore, now and then, to look more closely into such a character; and to reckon up the amount of those virtues which go to the composition of *a good sort of a man.*

* Nullum numen abest si sit Prudentia.—Juv.

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## XV. THEORY OF PESSIMISM.

Mille mali species ———.
OVID.

EVERY body is acquainted with the lively and malicious tale, which Voltaire has put together, to ridicule the doctrine of *Optimism* in the government of this world. That there is some difficulty in reconciling this doctrine with many particular facts, which are daily passing around us, must be allowed. But there is an opposite theory, not more just, and far less agreeable, which some persons seem to have taken up,—namely,—that of *Pessimism*; according to which, they hold that every thing falls out in a manner the most untoward and injurious for the human race.

The most zealous disciple of this school, whom I am acquainted with, is my friend Dr Grumble. I have already described another friend, Mr Acid, as somewhat given to the same doctrine; but his querulousness differs a good deal from that of the worthy Doctor;—the former proceeding more from the heart, the latter from the temper. Mr Acid's feelings are chiefly stirred by his care for others;—the Doctor's by a regard for himself. Under this impression, the good Doctor is persuaded that every thing in this world has been contrived with a purpose of annoyance towards mankind in general; but more especially towards himself, the Doctor, in particular. Whether it be war or peace, or fair weather or foul:—whether

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trade be flourishing, or going to decay:—whether cities are destroyed by earthquakes, or new islands emerge from the sea:—whether comets appear, or stones fall from the heavens, or hopes revive of a north-west passage:—from every event or phenomenon, the Doctor contrives to draw matter of complaint. Nor are his reflections confined to things of such importance; for the daily occurrences within this our city, and in his own house and family, are ordered in the same perverse manner, for the pure purpose of plaguing him. If any cross accident should happen, it is sure to be at the very time when its weight is most felt. If any thing more comfortable fall out, it is delayed till not worth getting, or is far short of what it might have been. Should the post be detained by a storm of snow, the Doctor loses an opportunity of a good bargain. If it arrive in proper time, a competitor steps in, and gets the better of him. If his chimney happen to smoke, it was a knavish builder who had a spite at him in finishing the house. If a present of game be sent, it is charged double carriage, or is too far gone for use. In short the Doctor has reversed the aphorism of the moral poet, and found out that *whatever is, is wrong.*

It was once my fortune to take a journey with the Doctor, in the course of which he found frequent occasion of illustrating his favourite notions. We set out from this city, in a beautiful morning, towards the end of May, when summer was putting on her first smiles. There are few things more cheerful than beginning a journey at such a season. The stir of the

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animal creation, shaking off sleep, and rousing themselves to the pursuits and enjoyments of the day;—the vigour of the vegetable world hastening into life and beauty;—the softness of the air;—the brightness of the sun;—all these things occasion a buoyancy and exhilaration in the spirits, which catch an infection from the pleasant objects around. That my friend, the Doctor, might be in proper trim to taste these beauties, I took care to have a cup of warm coffee and toast prepared for him, before setting out; as I have observed that a nice sense of the picturesque is incompatible with an empty stomach.

It was some time before we got our baggage adjusted,—the Doctor remarking it as a singular fact in his life, that he was perhaps the only man who had never chanced to meet with an honest trunk-maker, or an hostler who had common sense. When we reached the open fields, I could not contain myself from breaking out in admiration of the beautiful prospect, and fine weather. "Very fine," replied the Doctor, "if it would last;—but it will rain before evening.—Besides, this hot sun beating into the carriage is scarcely agreeable. Methinks light and heat might have been distributed to the world, without growing to such inconvenient extremes."

We had not gone far, when we met a young fellow driving a couple of asses. The antipathy of horses towards that animal is well known. As they approached us, the horse which was nearest them began to startle, shrink, and press against his companion, till he fairly forced us into a shallow ditch by the road-side, where

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we stuck fast. The Doctor began to rate the post-boy, who stood up for the honour of his cattle, and swore that he had driven them, wet and dry, any time these two years, and they had never before boggled at living soul, Ass or Christian. "But," said the Doctor, drawing himself up, "why should I blame this foolish lad? The whole proceeds from an instinct implanted by Nature, the benefit of which is not particularly obvious. It is odd, however, that the thing should fall out on this day of all others, the only one on which I have taken a journey for a twelvemonth."—"It is well," said I, "that things are no worse: we might have had our necks broken."—"That is but sorry comfort," replied the Doctor; "yet it is all we have in most cases."

Shortly after this disaster, on passing by a beautiful meadow, I observed, "That will be a fine crop of hay, if it get a little rain."—"It will get plenty after it is cut,"—rejoined the Doctor.

While we stopped to breakfast, the Doctor found several opportunities of touching on the ill contrivances of Nature for the support and sustentation of the human race. "What a silly thing it is," said he, as he was sipping his tea, "that we, in this island, should depend on the remotest corner of the globe for what is almost a necessary of life. It puts one in mind of Voltaire's pithy observation—'What a pity that the *Jesuits' Bark* should be found in America, and the fever which it cures in Europe.'"* "But has not

* "C'est dommage que le *quinquina* se trouve en Amerique, et la fièvre en nos climats."

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that very distance," replied I, "excited industry and enterprize in both nations which make the exchange?" "Pshaw!" said the Doctor,—"all restlessness and folly."

Soon after, looking into the inn-yard, where our carriage was getting ready, one of those insects called the *long spinner* came buzzing about the Doctor's face, and afterwards settled on the window, where it tottered up and down, awkwardly enough, on its slender unmanageable limbs. The Doctor regarded it, for some time, with a look of contempt: "I think," said he, "one could help out Nature here by a pair of scissars. That animal would evidently find itself much improved by having a joint or two lopped off."—"Pray Doctor," said I, "begin the experiment on yourself."

As we went on, the Doctor found room for censure in the laying outof the road,—the position of the milestones,—the structure of the turnpike gates,—the form of the gentlemen's houses and plantations,—the dulness or incivility of innkeepers,—the extravagance of charges,—and the general imperfection of waiters, chambermaids, hostlers, post-boys, wheel-carriages, horses, and harness.

Our road led us through a small hamlet, where we were interrupted by a crowd of young men and boys, engaged in hunting on dogs to worry a cat. In the countenance, voice, and gestures of this assembly, were portrayed every mark of savage exultation; and they were so deeply engaged in their sport, as to stop our progress. The Doctor, on seeing what they were about, suddenly bolted his head from the window, and

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exclaimed in a voice even louder than their own,—"Ye demons of hell!—Is there not enough of misery in this world, but you must increase it for your sport?" This unexpected address,—with the advance of the horses,—separated both combatants and spectators; by favour of which diversion, poor puss made her escape. The Doctor, as we proceeded, sunk back in gloomy reverie, and at length broke forth,—"Such is the order of Nature. Irrational creatures are formed with propensities to torture each other:—and lest they should want opportunities, one which calls itself rational, takes delight in setting them on."

We soon after reached the inn where we proposed dining, and passing the night. It was late when we arrived; and while dinner was getting ready, we walked out to admire the evening sun, which was now approaching the horizon, encircled by clouds of every form, and hue, and brightness. I could not but express my delight at this glorious apparition; and withal reminded my friend of his prophecy of bad weather. "True," said he, "I was mistaken; but after all, we should have been as well with a shower, to lay the dust."

Our inn happened to be really a comfortable one, and the dinner was good. The Doctor, no doubt, had some fault to find with every dish; yet he contrived to make a hearty meal. The hand of time having made certain inroads on his teeth, he proceeded rather slowly. "It is an odd thing," said he, "as we advance in life, and the powers of digestion, becoming feeble, require better mastication,—that our teeth should

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desert us just when they are most needed. I wonder Dr Paley has forgotten this among the fine adaptations of Nature."—" I suspect, Doctor," said I, " that it is a hint of temperance to us, as we grow older. But, at the worst, you have still left your slops and spoon-meat."—" Pah !" cried the Doctor,—" slops and spoon-meat !—the very thought turns my stomach."

I took occasion to remark on the accommodations of civilized life, and particularly the ease and comfort of travelling in our island, compared with other countries. " Were I even to admit your facts," replied the Doctor,—squeezing a lemon on his veal,—" I might dispute your inference. Those accommodations which you speak of, are merely the arts of luxury, which enervate the body, and corrupt the mind;—the very disease by which all societies tend to their dissolution. Is it not better to have health from nature, than from the doctor;—to use your own limbs, than to ride in a stifled carriage;—to brave the weather with impunity, than to cower over fires, in close dwellings;—with fifty other vain precautions to prop up an enfeebled system ?" Here the Doctor made a pause,—for much as he loved his theory, he did not choose to sacrifice his dinner in its defence. But after the table-cloth was removed, and we had drawn in our chairs to the fireside, he resumed, with great energy, his declamation against the arts and inventions of civilized life. " Nay, my worthy Doctor," said I,—" be not extreme. Some of those arts and inventions are not amiss. For instance, this is good port we are now drinking:—what say you to another bottle ?" " Good !"—ex-

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claimed he, taking off his glass—"yes, for bringing on gout and apoplexy. However, do as you will;—we have had a long journey to-day."

The Doctor could not help getting into a better understanding with human nature, as the evening advanced; but he still struggled hard for his system. "No, my good Sir," said he, as he took up the candle, to retire to bed, "depend upon it that things are but scurvily ordered in this world. At the same time, I will own, that if any thing like satisfaction is to be found, it is in expressing one's thoughts on the subject, when sociably seated with a rational friend."

Such is a sample of the worthy Dr Grumble, the *Pessimist.* But although this turn of thinking, when carried to a height, is both foolish and criminal;—foolish as leading to no remedy;—and criminal, as murmuring at dispensations in which we are bound to acquiesce;—it is still more unreasonable to draw from such inevitable evils a hatred of our fellow creatures. Yet misanthropy often erects itself on no better grounds than a resentment at the inflictions of Nature, which mankind do not create, and have it little in their power to alleviate.

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## XVI. SCRIBLERUS REDIVIVUS.

### CHAP. XII.

*Notices concerning the learned* DOCTOR ALBERTUS SYLLOGIVORUS: *With a plan for the General Improvement of Mankind.*

ABOUT this time, came from Germany, to pay a visit to Doctor Scriblerus, a learned friend of his, called *Doctor Albertus Syllogivorus*, a profound logician and antiquary, and deeply read in other profitable branches of knowledge. He spent fifteen years in the search of an eleventh category; and had lately gained renown throughout all Germany by a treatise on the knowledge and practice of the ancients concerning *Nut-crackers*, wherein he pointed out the decay of science, among the moderns, in that branch of economy. He was likewise possessed of several inestimable relics of antiquity; such as, a snuff-box made of the very tree which fell upon Horace, and the handle of one of Apicius's gridirons. But what he valued above all the rest, was a Greek manuscript, which, though now illegible, was known to be an original card from Aristotle to Plato, asking him down to the *Lyceum*, to partake of a *Welsh rabbit*, that they might talk over the *materia prima* together. These precious remains, which he exhibited to Dr Cornelius, awakened afresh his anguish for the loss of his shield.



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From such a conjunction, what could be expected but the most rare and curious inquiries. The Genius of the Schools lifted up his reverend head, and already anticipated the return of his power. They spoke of the *actus ultimus*,—the *forma formæ*,—the *causa causalis*—the animal spirits,—the hidden virtues of stones and amulets—the lengthening of life,—the renewal of youth,—and the transmutation of baser metals into gold.

Martin and Crambe were admitted to their learned conferences; but the slow verbosity of Dr Albertus quite overcame their patience. "Oh," whispered Crambe to Martin, "he is more tiresome than a rainy Sunday, or a country gentleman going over his improvements."

One hot summer's day, as they were walking out on the Edgeware road, they were met by a long string of carts and waggons, when the wind springing up, they were involved in such a whirlwind of dust as to be nearly stifled.—"Devil drive these carts," cried Dr Cornelius, his philosophy being quite overset by the annoyance. "This," said Crambe, "is the *vortices of Des Cartes* with a witness."—"Pshaw," rejoined the Doctor, who abhorred a quibble, "But there you named a great man:—second only to the divine Aristotle himself.—What a beautiful simplicity in his first principle, *Cogito, ergo sum*—the world brought out of a nut-shell. Just shut yourself up in a dark closet;—twinkle your eyes inwards;—and lo! you have it all:—*I think, therefore I am.*" "In my poor notion," quoth Martin, who was then munch-



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ing a tart which he had bought at a pastry-cook's by the road-side, " I would rather have put it thus, *I eat, therefore I am*,—for, in the first place, if I did not *eat*, I should not *be*;—and, secondly, I never feel a greater consciousness of my personality than when I am eating. An alderman at no other season hath that full sense of his official identity and dignity as at a city feast."

Dr Cornelius was somewhat shocked at this remark, which indicated that subjection to material things, from which he was desirous of setting free his son's mind. He did not care, however, to enter at large on the subject at present, but contented himself with saying, " No, child, the process of eating, however necessary or agreeable, is one of the *munera inferiora*, and not a proper foundation of universal knowledge. But to return to the great philosopher of whom I was making mention. What can be more curious than that theory of the *vortices*?—What prettier than the notion it gives of the rolling and tumbling, whirling and twirling, of the heavenly bodies?—And then made all out of his own brain,—no obligation to other men's discoveries,—no poking and watching after the vulgar proceedings of nature—But all struck out at a heat—all from the original *cogito*. I am confident he is in the right after all. As to the persecution against all manner of theories," continued the Doctor, " which hath, of late years, been lighted up by the inflammatory writings of Lord Bacon, and others, I scruple not to affirm that it is a mark of the barbarity of modern times."

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The Doctor now entered on the subject of *cause* and *effect*, which he pronounced to be nothing more than a *constant and invariable sequence.* "Then," quoth Crambe, "the horse is the cause of the cart at his tail."—"Excuse me," quoth the Doctor, "for in Ireland they yoke the horse with the breech outward, and make him push the cart on like a wheel-barrow." "Then all I can say," quoth Crambe, "is that, in Ireland, the cart is the cause of the horse."

Dr Albertus had brought with him from Germany a project, founded on pure Aristotelian principles, as well as the notions of great modern authors, for the reform of education, and the general improvement of mankind in their faculties, both intellectual and moral. As it is a work of very rare merit, and singular curiosity, I shall present my readers with a taste of it, as I find it among the papers which came into my hands.

"It is well known to those who are in the least tinctured with philosophy, that the soul receiveth her impressions no otherwise than a flour dumpling doth. Thus, the great Aristotle himself hath declared, that the cause why the impressions of memory are slight in infancy, is that the brain is yet too soft and medullary to retain them. Whereas, contrariwise, in old age, the brain hath acquired an over consistence and tenacity, whereby it resisteth, and difficultly receiveth, the impressions above-said. Hence it is, that in those two extremes of life, the power of memory is defective. But in the prime of our years, the brain hath reached its due firmness of texture towards receiving and re-



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taining those impressions, and then the memory is at its best. Just so, a dumpling, when first boiled, is delicate, and easily giveth way under the fingers of the cook, as quickly resuming its natural rotundity:—kept a few hours it becometh more tenacious:—but if it reposeth in the larder till next day, it acquireth an extreme rigidity, and scarcely yieldeth to the tooth.

"And as a dumpling receiveth various sorts of impressions, from fingers, knives, forks, spoons, skewers, and teeth;—so also doth the soul from memory, the senses, imagination, the passions of love, envy, avarice, and the like.

"Now, who seeth not, in the above principle, an easy way of enlarging the human faculties, and improving the moral constitution, by a few simple experiments on the brain. Mankind have hitherto, in their endeavours after education, begun at the wrong end of the body; foolishly supposing that an application to one extremity, was the nearest way to drive wisdom into the other: and truly the badness of their method may be seen in the little success they have had. But it is plain that the true way of proceeding, is to work, not *a posteriori*, but *a priori*; to brighten and whet the faculties themselves; and then a world of trouble in after study and flogging will be spared. In short, if the methods which I recommend shall be pursued, I venture to engage, not only that the improvement of youth will be much hastened; but that every grown gentleman may have his apprehension cleared up, and any little turn to lying or cheating removed, without the least confinement, or hin-

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derance of business:—and any lady may be cured of slander, or affectation, without missing a single ball.

"Although the nature of my plan, and its good effects, be so obvious, that it is hardly necessary to enlarge upon it; yet, in order to make it quite clear to those who are not so familiar with metaphysical inquiries, I will illustrate it by one or two examples.

"And first, touching the improvement of memory, that great store-house or work-shop of the mind, wherein all her tools and materials are orderly disposed, and kept clean for use, is it not plain that by due means being tried, the foresaid workshop may be sooner opened for the taking in of goods, and kept longer from shutting up, than ordinary. For since the weakness of the faculty in our youthful years ariseth wholly from the softness of the *cerebellum* or brain; and in old age from its induration and rigidity; it is plain, that to induce an earlier ripeness of the talent, nothing more is needed than to communicate a certain firmness to the medullary particles, which will thence afford a proper *matrix* or bed, for retaining the impressions. And, by a contrary process, the premature stiffness which happeneth in old age, may as easily be hindered.

"Nor will this operation be confined to the memory; for the impressions of sense, imagination, and all the other inlets or receptacles of knowledge, may, by using the like means, be equally advantaged.

"It only remaineth, to suggest the method whereby a process of the above kind is to be applied to the brain. But herein, as I have not yet wholly matured my thoughts, and moreover purpose to solicit a patent

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for the administration of such specifics as I shall recommend, it cannot be expected that I should risk the fruits of my study by a premature disclosure. Suffice it only to hint, that the most natural channel of conveyance to the brain, seemeth to be the nasal orifice; whereby, what notable virtues may be transmitted, in the form of essences, extracts, powders, spirits, and perfumes, I need not say. For it is well known, (as we are told by the learned Bishop Wilkins, in his *Tractate concerning a passage to the Moon*,) that certain ancient nations lived wholly by the smell of pleasing odours. As to the external applications of shaving, cupping, blistering, &c. these I only touch upon.

"And in like manner, it is easy to show how the various passions and propensities of men may be moderated and controlled. Their dependence on the brain is evidenced in the common uses of language; as when we say of a choleric man that his brain is heated,—of a wild fellow that he is hair-brained,—of a lover that he is crack-brained,—of a sot that he is muddy-brained, &c. To such persons, the application of the remedy above hinted at, under various shapes and modifications, is too obvious to be insisted on; and in this way what a reform may be wrought on the moral constitution of society, is not to be calculated.

"And as *Habit* is well known to be nothing else than certain frequented paths or foot-ways in the brain, whereby the ideas and animal spirits pass to and fro, like cattle to a pond; I have no doubt that, in the improvements of practical chirurgery, we may in time arrive at such art, as to lay open the cranium

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or skull; and, by the introduction of proper instruments, correct any vicious tendencies in the cerebral organ: so that the cure of a prejudice, or wrong bias, will be as common as the turning a parish road.

"In applying the specific to particular cases, it is clear that regard must be had to the temperament and condition of the patient, as well as to the nature of his disorder. Thus, for persons of quality, in whom the drudgery of any mental exertion would be unbecoming, a small dose of intellect will be sufficient. To correct habitual drunkards, sharpers, and old politicians, the strongest remedies must be tried. As to curing a methodist of his *Inward light*,—or a poet of his *Muse*,—I believe the attempt must be given up as hopeless.

"In the progress of improvement too, means will doubtless be discovered of administering by wholesale, or to numbers at once, in cases of emergency. Thus, if a minister were desirous of securing a majority, in a pressing question, a slight course of my preparation might open their eyes at once to the expediency of the measure, and remove any unseasonable qualms. I am however told, that this use of my specific hath already been discovered in this country, and long practised with the best success."

This is all that I find distinctly put down of the plan of the learned *Dr Albertus*; although there are various fragments of corollaries, and particular applications, distinguished by the same depth as the general doctrine. Among these, is a project for discovering the human character by means of external ob-

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servations on the body, known to modern science under the names of Physiognomy, Craniology, Phrenology, &c. And whereas, certain late authors of note in these studies, with the imperfection of all imitators, confine their remarks to the upper extremity, taking their rules from the structure of the face, ears, cranium, *occiput*, &c.—our learned inquirer, on the other hand, extendeth his contemplations to the rearward termination of the *corpus* or trunk, where the amplitude and regularity of the features afford a rich field for conjecture. From the shape, colour, consistency, rotundity, or depression of this organ, it is not to be told what just rules our profound observer draws, towards ascertaining the character of the individual. Indeed, the slightest reflection must satisfy us how direct a channel this is to the finer principles of our nature; for having been long known as the *Seat of Honour*, it must be nearly allied to the whole train of moral sentiments.

Whether the learned author ever put the last hand to the above great project for the improvement of mankind, is to be doubted; as I find that he was carried off, soon after his return to Germany, by a surfeit, from eating too freely of a *Lucanian* boar, garnished with wine and radishes, according to the receipt of Horace. It was thought that the Doctor might have been cured by swallowing an emetic; but this he resolutely refused, as contrary to the prescription of Galen, who enjoineth, on such occasions, a decoction of bruised caterpillars beaten up with oil and honey; in a copious use whereof the Doctor persisted to the last.

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## XVII. ON MARRIAGE.

Felices ter et amplius
Quos irrupta tenet copula, nec malis
Divulsus querimoniis,
Supremâ citius solvet amor die.
HOR.

MOST of my predecessors, in this vocation of periodical censure, have bestowed a share of their attention on the subject of Matrimony,—have endeavoured to point out the chief causes of its failure in producing happiness,—and given some advices towards insuring that great end of the engagement. A relation so important indeed,—whose consequences have such an influence over public and private virtue,—and extend so far beyond the individuals by whom it is first contracted,—demands notice from all those who profess to make men better and happier. I shall therefore offer no apology for occasionally touching on this subject in the course of my lucubrations.

It may seem a little presumptuous, indeed, in one whom some impertinent people are beginning to set down as an old bachelor, to offer any opinion upon a state of which he has had no experience. But much may be learned from diligent observation; and my reader will not forget the common saying, that lookers on sometimes form a better judgment of the game than those who are actually engaged.

The view which I propose to take of the subject, at present, is of a very sober and practical kind. It

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will be addressed rather to the reason than the passions; and I venture to predict, will be more approved of by the mothers than the daughters among my fair disciples;—though, if taken in the proper sense, it may, I hope, be useful to both.

One of the oldest complaints on the subject of Matrimony, is the sacrifice of love to interest, in chusing a partner; and to this cause, more than any other, is ascribed the infelicity which so often attends the married state. I am not sure that an impartial view of life will confirm this opinion. It may perhaps be granted, that where money or rank are the sole considerations, and lead to the choice of a helpmate who possesses no other recommendation,—or who has qualities disagreeable or unworthy,—the result is not likely to be good. But it scarcely follows from this, that what is commonly called *Love* (in other words a rash and youthful inclination) is the safest foundation of Marriage, or the best security for a steady attachment. And as this mistake is not uncommon in amiable minds,—and has been the cause of many an injudicious choice, as well as rejection,—I will make some further remarks to explain my meaning. I design them chiefly for the benefit of my fair readers, who risk a deeper stake of happiness in Marriage than our sex,—and whose temperament and education expose them to greater errors in the choice of a partner.

Young persons of sensibility and generous feelings, —who have contemplated the world chiefly in fictitious tales—and whose fancy has been heated with notions

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of the omnipotence of love, towards mortal happiness, —imagine that it would be little less than prostitution to enter into a union with one for whom they did not feel sentiments of this ardent kind. They read, in poets and novelists, of a passion before which all common considerations must give way. To judge of life from such representations, it would seem that the only concern of rational and immortal beings was Love. All other objects,—the noblest, as well as the most common and indispensable,—are passed over as if they had no existence. The pursuits of fortune, or ambition, or beneficence,—the offices of society and friendship,—the culture of the mind,—the exercises of piety,—the employments of domestic economy;—all these form objects of concernment in real life, which are wholly overlooked in the romantic philosophy,—and yet do each require such a share of our thoughts as forbids any single passion to engross the mind.

Nor are those who inculcate the power of Love, though very full of its merits, at all clear in their explanation of its nature. They represent it as a kind of inspiration suddenly arising in the mind, irresistible by the *patient*, and often wholly inexplicable to every one else. Like the *Inward Light* of fanatics in religion, it admits of no common standard of judgment; and each individual is left to measure its existence and degree, in his own case, by the strength of his impressions,—which vary with every variety in imagination, or natural sensibility. In both cases, the frame of thinking and feeling being founded on ele-

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ments not submitted to reason, is liable to all the aberration and inconstancy of the guides whom it has followed.

When, on such grounds as these, we take resolutions in the real concerns of life, it is odds but we are deceived; because passion always exaggerates its objects, and frequently disguises them, either on the favourable or unfavourable side. No passion is more deceiving than Love. It is proverbial in investing its object with attractions which no one else can see, and which really do not exist. It is equally skilful in concealing faults. And one who marries under such delusions, will awaken to bitter disappointment, when a closer intimacy shall discover how different the real partner is from the previous idol of a heated fancy. It is in the nature of all violent passions to exhaust themselves; and a wife or husband who might have fulfilled a sober expectation, may lose each other's love, merely by falling short of a perfection unattainable and imaginary.

Nor are the evils of the opposite effect less common, whereby a happy union is often prevented from similar delusions. When a young woman engages the affections of a man of worth,—but deficient, perhaps, in the showy accomplishments which inspire romantic love,—she proceeds to ask herself, according to the rule of novelists, whether she could sacrifice country, friends, and fortune, for his sake,—and be content to live with him in a cottage or a desert;—and if her feelings answer in the negative to this strict appeal, then, to be sure, she cannot be his wife. Nay, there

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have been women weak enough to be persuaded to reject a worthy suitor by the sneers of their companions, when their own better judgment would have determined otherwise. If I might presume, however, to advise, in such a case, the first inquiry of a virtuous woman should be (where no prior attachment interferes,—and where worldly circumstances are suitable), whether the person who addresses her be a man of sense and virtue;—whether he have acted his part well in the other relations of life in which he has been tried;—whether he be valued by his friends, and respected in the world. These are the best securities for expecting from him tenderness and fidelity as a husband. The mutual sympathy of virtue is the noblest, as well as the surest, foundation for increasing affection. Next to this, good sense, and good temper, —with a certain agreement in opinions, pursuits, and habits,—are the chief ingredients in nuptial happiness. As to these last, however, custom, and a mutual desire to please, will go far to reconcile original disparities. A judicious compliance of temper is indeed one of the first objects of prudence, as well as duty, in all who live together. And if such persons would but consider, how important is their mutual harmony, compared with the value of the common objects of their difference, one would think that a regard to their own interest would dispose them to forbearance and concession. An interchange of such gentle offices produces the sentiment of *Esteem*, which is of slow growth, but steady endurance, and increases by intimacy and time.

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If we consider further, what sources of interest and mutual feeling are awakened by the cares of a family;—how tenderly two virtuous parents are thus united in a new train of duties and affections;—we shall be sensible that the first uncompounded sentiment of their union, is but one of many ingredients in their happiness; and that this sentiment, if at first slight, can be much strengthened, or its place even supplied, by other causes of endearment.

My reader must not too hastily conclude, from all this, that I agree with Mrs Malaprop in the play, in thinking that it is as well for a young couple to begin with a little aversion,—that they may have room for coming round during the remainder of their days. Neither do I even go so far as Dr Johnson's blunt doctrine, "that marriages would, on the average, be equally happy, were they made by order of the Lord Chancellor, on due consideration of the circumstances of the parties." Such an arrangement, however useful to the public, would at least much interfere with the repose of that great law-officer. I am therefore inclined to leave to individuals their free choice; only I would fain persuade them to a little of that impartial determination which such a form of judicial wedlock would possess.

Last of all, I must protest against the imputation of striking Love out of the catalogue of rational feelings, or of maintaining that it exists only in the dreams of youthful enthusiasm. I allow that it is often found in the soundest and most virtuous minds. But then, it is in alliance with reason:—it springs

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from certain amiable qualities truly possessed by its object:—and is so far from being inconsistent with just esteem, that it never promises a steady endurance when unsupported by that sentiment. All that I would require of lovers is, that they should be able to give such reasons for their attachment as might satisfy a kind and prudent friend.

Neither am I an unbeliever in many instances of heroic affection, and devotedness, among persons united by a virtuous love. But I am persuaded that such instances have occurred most frequently in wedded life; and among those whose attachment was at first founded less on extravagant passion, than on reason and virtue. The contrast exhibited by Miss Edgeworth, in her admirable Tale of *Leonora*, between the sentimental mistress, and the long-suffering devoted wife,—is, I believe, no less true to nature, than it is noble and affecting in fictitious narrative. I repeat, therefore, that a well-grounded esteem will ripen, by habit and complacency, into a warmth sufficient to supply the torch of Hymen with a bright and steady flame; while the kindling taken from the fires of love is apt to blaze with intermission, and perish by its own extremes.

I doubt not that my detractors will allege, that the foregoing reflections are designed to promote some matrimonial scheme of my own; and that, knowing how little pretension I have to inspire the tender passion myself, I have an interest in discrediting its power. Let such persons, however, learn, to their confusion, that they have wholly mistaken my aim;—which, in

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truth, is no other than to introduce to the notice of my readers a poem, wherein the little Divinity has been treated with some discourtesy. Whether I have done wisely in venturing on such an act of heroism,—not to say desperation,—as to attack the ALL-PREVAILING POWER,—my readers must judge, when they see the poem, which I design to lay before them in my next paper.

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## XVIII. THE GARDEN OF HYMEN,

### A VISION.

Ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν.
HOM. IL. A. v. 63.

DREAMS ARE FROM JOVE, old Homer said,
And not by heedless Fancy bred;
Straight from the skies they take their flight,
And drop into our heads at night.
What wonder, then, that those who dream
By *Aganippe's* haunted stream,
Should gaze on worlds of brighter hue,
And find their inspiration true.

The Priest was short, the guests were gay,
On friend HONORIO's wedding day;
No riot or expense was there,
But welcome plain, and country fare;
I mingled with the happy crew,
And lent my cordial wishes too,



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That plenty still their board might spread,
And comely offspring grace their bed,
That health might bless, and love endure :—
Could wishes serve, the thing was sure.

All spells and symbols were prepared,
And round the *Bridal-cake* was shared,
To aid the visions of the night,
And bring the future fates to light.

The feasting o'er, and safe in bed,
The charm bestow'd beneath my head,
Sleep soon surpris'd, while Fancy's play
Resum'd the bus'ness of the day,
And working on her vagrant theme,
Wove the slight texture of a Dream.

Methought I suddenly was placed
Within a region wide and waste,
Yet here and there diversified
By verdant spots on every side.
Here spread the desert vast and rude
In unproductive solitude ;
Or hills with towering summit frown'd,
And curs'd with shade the fruitful ground :
There farms in goodly tilth were seen,
And flocks that pastur'd on the green ;
Devolving rivers fed the plain ;
At distance toil'd the restless main ;
Here cots the shade and shelter chose,
And there conspicuous cities rose.



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Nor did the clime prevailing here
Less various than the soil appear;
For storm and sunshine, rain and fair,
Cours'd in succession through the air:
Now floods and tempests overthrew,
And now reviving zephyrs blew;
Now vapours sadden'd o'er the earth,
Or frosts consumed the vernal birth;
Anon the heav'n was azure bright,
And glow'd with Empyrèan light.

The distant perspective was fair,
Smooth seem'd the ground, and soft the air;
But rough and barren all at hand,
And faithless bogs deform'd the land.

The tenants of this diverse ground
As various as their soil were found;
Well-favour'd, homely, old, and young,
Of every garb,—of every tongue:
Some tript the road with gesture gay;
Some slowly plodded on their way;
With step assur'd, and lofty mien,
Some sought the sunshine to be seen;
While others, of the glare afraid,
Crept unambitious through the shade.
Some by their wit or luck had found
A path on smooth and pleasant ground,
Where all the products of the land
Seem'd but to court their careless hand:
Others were doom'd, with pain and toil,
To gather from a stinted soil,

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And struggle through perplexing ways
The cloudy period of their days.

Onward, methought, our course we held,
By some superior power impelled:
One near, I ask'd, of courtesy,
What might this place or people be?—
" Around us spreads on every side
The WILDERNESS OF LIFE," he cried;
" Behind, all indistinct but fair,
The fields of Infancy appear,
And onward at the farthest stage,
The bleak and barren hills of Age.
We now have reach'd the middle way,
Where strength is firm, and hopes are gay;
And though the ills of life we know,
We still have force to ward the blow.
Within that CIRCUIT near at hand,
Hymen is guardian of the land,
And thither all the pilgrims tend
For helpmates to their journey's end.
Some say, within that favour'd bound,
The only certain joys are found;
Others affirm 'tis all a snare
To steal content, and double care;
Which is the truth, I wot not I,—
To know, perhaps a man must try;
But here's the rub;—if found to pain,
We cannot slip the noose again.
Yet go, and shape thine own career;
EACH FOR HIMSELF 's the maxim here;



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And no one from his own design
Can spare a moment's thought to thine."

Thus left my fortune to pursue,
I sought th' Enclosure now in view,
Where hedgerows interlac'd between
Conceal'd in part the inner scene.
Thither continual pilgrims press'd,
Each striving to outrun the rest;
Yet, tho' so plain the passage show'd,
Some few there were who miss'd the road;
These hail'd their lot, from troubles free,
And triumph'd in their liberty:
Yet oft a sideward step they took,
And cast within a longing look;
And after many a league past on,
And wisdom with their youth was flown,
Some hobbled back, with awkward pace,
And, propp'd on crutches, sought the place.

The access thro' this circling bound
By various Entrances was found,
Each kept by its peculiar Guard,
Whom, as they chose, the crowds preferred

The first was beauteous to behold,
A Cherub Boy with wings of gold:
His hair in curling tresses grew,
Fresh as the ruddy morn his hue,
His eyes were soft, his features gay,
His smile more open than the day:

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The wings, the bow, and quiver show'd
The name and functions of the God.

This Entrance chiefly lur'd the young,
A light enthusiastic throng,
Warm, giddy, thoughtless of annoy,
And confident of promis'd joy:
With arms enlink'd, by pairs they came,
All sighing forth their mutual flame;
While from each object in their view
The fond intoxication grew:
The brooks more gentle warbling made,
The trees entwin'd a softer shade,
Fresh flowers beneath their footstep sprung,
The amorous birds their descant sung,
While soft Arabian gales arose
That sooth'd the senses to repose.
A light more glaring than the true
A strange delirious splendour threw,
And all appear'd in forms more gay
Than Nature's mintage could display.

The gentle Deity the while
Receiv'd them with engaging smile;
The pleasures of the place he told,
Beyond the reach of power or gold;
There still propitious skies are clear,
And earth unlabour'd fruits will bear;
For hearts whom kindred bonds unite
Heav'n hath reserved its own delight;

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No vulgar wants can mar their joy,
Nor years relax, nor usage cloy;
All intermingled, mind with mind,
No other bliss they seek or find,
But, wrapt in long Elysium, prove
The all-sufficiency of Love.

Such hopes inflam'd each eager breast,
And on the sanguine myriads press'd;
The road which usher'd to the gate
To common eyes was short and straight,
Yet all, impatient of delay,
Reproach'd the tedious length of way.
I mingled with the rest, and trod
The Garden of the Nuptial God.

The genial Power himself was there,
And welcom'd every entering pair;
On each successive as they pass'd
Th' indissoluble bond he cast,
Which seem'd t' embellish,—not restrain;—
For flowers conceal'd the twining chain.

Elate the pilgrims gaz'd around
This region of enchanted ground,
Expecting everywhere to rise
The charms of promis'd paradise;
And while the fond illusion stay'd
They coin'd the wonders they survey'd:
But sped the happy period soon
That vanish'd with the waning Moon,

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They look'd, and were amaz'd to find
The very world they left behind:
The country differed but in name,
Its clime, its aspect all the same;
'Twas still, they saw, a mingled scene
Where good and evil intervene,
And if some brighter hours had room,
They only brought a darker gloom.
No golden grain spontaneous rose,
No fruit adorn'd th' uncultured boughs,
But all, from a penurious soil,
Was wrung by watching, thrift, and toil.
Shock'd with the truth, in sad amaze,
The helpmates stand in mutual gaze;
In vain each other's looks explore
For charms so often felt before;
New failings every hour descried
Are keenly blamed and justified;
The dreams of transient passion fail
When tempers clash,—or wants assail;—
And sour Mistrust with Hate conspire
To stain the hallow'd nuptial fire.

I left my station now to trace
The other Inlets of the place.
Before the next a Wretch appeared
With wrinkles, and a length of beard;
His garments tattered, foul, and old,
His body shrunk with want and cold,
Yet with a stubborn spirit still
Endur'd the voluntary ill.

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Close to his heart embraced he bore
A casket filled with precious ore,
And locks and bars their strength combined
To guard his treasure heap'd behind.
The pining look, the sleepless eye,
The still insatiable sigh,
And all the attributes of care
The Power of AVARICE declare.

The gloomy landscape all around
Suited the Genius of the ground:
Continual vapour dropt in dew,
And east winds blighted all that grew;
The path was rugged, steep, and bare;
No trooping birds frequented there;
Nor Spring diffus'd her annual spoil
To mantle the unfriendly soil:
Yet golden grains the path did strow,
And cavern'd diamond flam'd below.
Sharp-visag'd men, on every side,
In wigs and gowns their labour plied;
And words were heard of uncouth sound,
And quills and parchments strew'd the ground.

This passage to the genial God
By ill-assorted pairs was trod:
Grave damsels leer'd on youthful swains,
Who follow'd struggling in their chains;
And girls, with partners old and bent,
Like blooming sacrifices went.
I followed, as they pass'd the gate,
And mark'd their soon-decided fate:

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Nature herself the bans forbid
Which join'd the living and the dead;
Discordant habits adverse drew,
Wranglings enflam'd, suspicion grew,
Till far, repell'd, they bore with pain
The utmost limit of their chain.
Sometimes a Fiend in saffron dyed
Haunted the elder partner's side,
Whose glass, for nature's work, display'd
Forms in its own distemper'd shade;
And from the faint infection stole
A mining ulcer on the soul.

Yet some who entered by this gate
Were less unhappy in their fate;
When Mammon's reconciling tie
Combin'd in sordid sympathy,
They social jogg'd from day to day,
Pilf'ring and storing all the way.

The next Approach AMBITION sway'd,
In gold and Tyrian silks array'd,
A regal coronet he wore,
And eastern cestus clasp'd before,
Where gems of every perfect ray
Threw back its lustre on the day:
Rich plumage of a thousand dyes
Nodded its shade above his eyes;
His ermin'd robe came circling round,
And swept in flowing folds the ground.
Attendant at his beck were seen
Myriads of ribbons, blue and green,

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Gold sticks, and garters, stars, and keys,
And leagues of ancient pedigrees:
And bows, and gestures, and grimace,
Had banish'd nature from the place.

The pairs who by this inlet pass'd
Were ill-assorted like the last,
And youth with age advanced to join
An offering at Ambition's shrine:
Nor found their near-resembling fate
More comfort in the wedded state:
For soon the secret was disclosed
Of habits, tempers, tastes opposed,
And stubborn self-esteem still eyed
Its portion on the losing side.
One of descent and titles spoke,
Degraded by a vulgar yoke;
The other prais'd inherent worth,
Contrasted with the dreams of birth;
And mourn'd th' unequal barter made
Of youth and pleasure for a shade.

One Gate was guarded by a Power
Who chang'd with every changing hour,
So mutable you scarce could trace
The sex, apparel, form, or face;
But each successive aspect bore
A contrast to the one before.
The garments flowing unconfined
Took shifting figures in the wind;
And, as each fresh delusion grew,
You still esteem'd the phantom true.

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All sense of vision was denied,
But ever-busy hands were plied,
Which, striking headlong in the dark,
As often miss'd as hit the mark.
Such wayward gifts the Genius show
Of CHANCE who rules so much below.

No access to this Entrance led,
But crossing paths around were spread,
Which baffling compass, chart, or sight,
Took all directions but the right.
The pilgrims wander'd here and there,
They thought not how,—they knew not where;—
And still, fortuitously caught,
Unconscious to the gate were brought;
There, strangely sorted, two and two,
Were shov'd, with mutual wonder, through.

A knot so whimsically cast
You'd think was never made to last;
Yet,—though some humours unconfined
Parted as quickly as they joined;—
And some with graver thought endued
Their hasty fit at leisure rued;—
Yet wondrous is the tale to tell
How oft a luckier hap befel;
And, as in scorn of Wisdom's aid,
Such freaks a better ending made
Than many a match by line and rule
Adjusted in Discretion's school.

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To end the *Table* Fancy drew,
One other Inlet met my view,
Which, well considered, pleased me more
Than any I had mark'd before;
Yet such caprices man control,
'Twas least frequented of the whole.
The Genius who presided there
Was mild of aspect, tall, and fair;
His age had reach'd that mellow glow
Which manhood deepens on the brow;
His features, when at distance view'd,
Had somewhat of a thoughtful mood,
Yet, nearer seen, bespoke a mind
Where strength and cheerfulness combined.
To find his name demands a pause;—
Words second ill what Fancy draws;—
To suit the subject of my theme
'Twere something warmer than ESTEEM.

PRUDENCE was near, of look sedate,
Who counsel'd each to choose his mate;
She stopp'd the headlong haste of youth,
And whisper'd this important truth,—
Till Reason—Virtue—both approve,
There cannot be enduring love.

The region round, though fresh and fair,
Possess'd no meretricious glare;
The path was neither strew'd with flowers,
Nor led through amaranthine bowers;

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Yet tender grass grew underfoot,
And fragrant blossom promis'd fruit;
The waters trill'd no soothing song,
But carried life the plants among;
And, fled the triflers of the grove,
Here linger'd still the constant dove.
The road by which the pilgrims went
Still mounted with a slight ascent,
And, wound in many turns, supplied
A mutual view on every side;
Thus long acquaintance lent its aid,
And seal'd the choice affection made.

The Guardian of this sober way
Used no allurements to betray;
But thro' the portal fairly show'd
A prospect of the future road,
Where fairy fields, nor cloudless skies,
Encourag'd idle hopes to rise.
Thus warn'd, the pairs, when usher'd thro',
Found all their expectations true;
In life's alternate fortune strove
T' enjoy the good, the ill improve;
While equal temper, calm and kind,
Diffus'd its radiance o'er the mind.
Nor, caught by the romantic tone,
That life was made for love alone,
Met they with scorn what fate prepares
Of other joys and other cares,
But turn'd with active zest to all,
As business, friendship, duty call.

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Still onward as their course they plied,
A beauteous Partner join'd their side;
Her eyes a mild expression threw,
Her garment was unchanging blue,
Chief guardian of the nuptial flame
Confess'd, and CONSTANCY her name.
Where'er she moved, beneath her tread
The earth a softer carpet spread;
The rougher parts she smooth'd away,
And added lustre to the gay;
The yoke, by her peculiar slight,
At once was made more strong and light;
And every blessing she procured
By Time was heightened and ensured.
As Health and Beauty pass'd away,
Her power but wax'd with their decay,
And Life, beneath her soft control,
Grew brighter as it reach'd the goal.

Another Power who caught my eye,
With awkward look of Constancy,
Yet, harsh, and of ungracious airs,
Tended the ill-appointed pairs.
This reconciler, HABIT called,
The helpmates to his yoke enthrall'd;
The angry jerk, the unequal pace,—
The stubborn pull which spoilt the race,—
Alternately he check'd or sooth'd,
Till all the harsher points were smooth'd;
And they whose humours most oppose
Go passing gently at the close.

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I now had reached a rising ground
Whose height o'erlook'd the country round,
And, stretching past th' enclosure wide,
Took in the space on either side:
My purpose both Estates to view,
And fix the happier of the two.
But after all my labour done,
I ended just where I begun.
For, gazing on the wond'rous show
Which mov'd, as in a scene, below;—
Tho' joy and sorrow, peace and strife,
Mark'd in extremes the married life,—
But balanc'd in the single lot
With more tranquillity throughout;—
Yet all the myriads I beheld
Were so by present things impelled,
That, long in doubt, I almost grew
To think the Stoic's *dictum* true,
That permanent conditions came
In substance to be much the same.
Bus'ness or Pleasure,—Habit's sway,—
The objects of the passing day;—
Ambition's aims,—the care of Health,—
Religion, Politics, or Wealth,—
Peculiar taste,—the Social claim,—
And even whims without a name;—
These drew ten thousand different ways,
And pleas'd and busied all their days;
And ruling with an influence blind,
O'ermaster'd and absorb'd the mind.

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Yet these indifferent fill'd the hour,
Or sued or shunn'd the Nuptial Power;
And show'd that both estates suffice
For comfort, if unstain'd by vice;—
If to the body's health be join'd
Some fit engagement for the mind.

While thus, in contemplation lost,
These visions o'er my fancy cross'd,
A graceful figure nearer drew,
Whom for the Garden's God I knew:
A damsel by the hand he led,
And, introducing, smiled and said:—

" My gentle friend, what make you here?—
How sad and silent you appear!—
Within this genial circuit none
Is left to nurse his griefs alone.
My fair companion here endures
To bind her destiny to yours:
I see your grateful looks rejoice,—
The sudden rapture chokes your voice;—
But words are needless to attest,—
We guess them,—and forgive the rest.
This wreath of ev'ry fragrant flower
Is all the symbol of my power;
A sweet constraint,—for which the free
May gladly change their liberty.
Come then, nor suffer more delay;
You lose each moment that you stay;



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And, known the bliss, you'll chide your fate
That sent you happiness so late."

I started as the Genius spoke;
And, shrinking from the chain, awoke.

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## XIX. LETTERS ON THE FOREGOING POEM.

Postquam dicendi finem fecit, alius alii variè adsentiebantur.
SALLUST.

I FIND, by several letters which have been lately sent me, that the poem with which I presented my readers in my last paper, has been variously received;—but, on the whole, has given less offence than I expected. Some of my fair correspondents indeed, are much scandalized at the malicious turn given to the happy beginnings of the love marriages:—others laugh to scorn the sober deity of Esteem:—one lady is out of all patience at the author's impertinent rejection of the fair partner offered him at the conclusion of the poem:—while another asks, in a serious tone, if I really design to banish matrimony out of the world. But, on the other hand, I have encouragement from many sensible married persons, who approve of the general drift of the piece, and quote their own experience in support of its doctrines. Now, I would have my younger readers to recollect, that experience of what has happened, is a safer guide in judging of what is yet to happen, than the fairest promises that ever



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were coloured by fancy or enthusiasm :—and that, on the average of life, it is wiser to choose a happiness which is likely to endure, than one of higher relish or intensity which passes quickly away.

I will now give several of the letters which I have received, on the above subject;—leaving my readers to draw their own conclusions.

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"DEAR MR KEEPER.—And yet I know not if I can apply that kindly epithet to a wicked traducer, a cruel calumniator of the power of Love. Unhappy that thou art! to be unconscious of the ecstatic thrill, —the soft illusions,—the ineffable sympathies of the heart. But thou hast never felt the enthusiastic delight, and knowest not what it means. Alas! how shouldst thou? Can the shivering denizen of the pole imagine the glories of an Italian summer?—Can the inmate of gloomy Tartarus expatiate in the bowers of Elysium?—Ah! Mr Keeper, hadst thou been gifted with a soul like mine :—Had thy heart envelloped such a train of sensibilities as vibrate through every chord of this too tender frame :—Hadst thou courted those delicious studies which paint the unutterable mazes of complicated emotion :—thou hadst never,—oh never,—so far outraged the immortal divinity of Love. Yet let me send thee to those guides with whom I have rapturously wandered. To the exquisite *Heloise*,—the overwhelming *Werter*,—the passionate *Delphine*,—the melting *Mathilde* ;—not to mention those effusions of domestic genius, which,

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emanating from the Minerva press, diffuse the radiations of sympathy through our delighted land. Then shouldst thou avoid such horrid profanations. Then mightest thou, too, bring thine offering to feed the never-dying flame. Then,—and not till then,—wilt thou merit the approval of ecstatic souls, and among others, that of

"EUDOCIA LINDAMIRA."

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—My address on the present occasion, you will find very unlike that of the giddy part of my sex, (too numerous in the present age), whose impertinent raptures and reveries you have so well exposed in your late poem regarding the married state. It was indeed the prospect and contemplation (so to speak) of the several dangers you there point out, that hath discouraged me hitherto from entering into the condition of wedlock, notwithstanding many pressing offers:—though, to be sure, I have still abundance of time before me to deliberate. But in truth, Mr Keeper, there is a levity and forwardness about the young women of the present day, which must have struck a man of sense, like you, as very unbecoming; —and in particular, a practice of thrusting themselves before others of their sex, who, though still young, may have a few years more experience than they; and who maintain a reserve and dignity befitting their sex. I wish, Sir, you would take an opportunity of enlarging on this subject; and of repressing those empty gill-flirts, whose boldness, (I am ashamed to



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say), seems more acceptable to some of your sex, than that graceful retiring propriety which others have studied to maintain. I was particularly taken with the conclusion of the piece, where you so properly drew back from that forward creature who absolutely made proposals to you, face to face. At the same time, Sir, I would not have you be discouraged; as there are women in the world, less coming, who would still know how to value a person of your character;—and a lady of decorous manners, with whom the hey-day of youth was gone by, (though far from those years which can be called advanced), might conduce to the comfort of your future days, far more than any raw unthinking girl.—Meantime, I remain, Sir, yours within the bounds of propriety,

"BRIDGET WHALEBONE."

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—I was mightily pleased with that part of your poem about marriage, which describes those old fools, who, after having safely passed all mischief, turn back on their crutches, and hobble into the snare.—Such, Mr Keeper, was my own fate. My days went on as easily and happily as heart could wish, till I found I was called an *old bachelor*. Then, partly moved by that foolish nickname,—partly taken by the pretty free air of Miss Sally Scamper,—I was tempted, in an evil hour, to commit matrimony. Since that time, I need not tell you what a dance I have been led. Oh, Mr Keeper, I groan when I

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think of it. May you, and all good Christians, take warning by my fate!— Your afflicted servant,

"RICHARD RUE."

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—Notwithstanding the ridicule you have thrown on over-late adventures in the lottery of matrimony, I may quote my own case in favour of a happier result. Circumstances prevented me from marrying till late in life; but then, in entering into that connection, I sought not for a mistress, but for an agreeable and rational friend. I married a lady somewhat younger than myself, though long past the years of youth. In my choice, I looked for the qualities of good sense, good temper, good manners, and above all, good principles;—and I have not been disappointed. We have now lived several years together; and I can truly say, that not one moment has occurred in which either has repented. In short, Sir, I believe, that the causes of unhappiness are not more abundant in late than in early marriages; and that, when such dissatisfactions do occur, they proceed from a similar source, in both cases,—namely, an error in the first selection.—I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

"WILLIAM STEDFAST."

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"MY DEAR MR KEEPER,—Do you know, Mr Keeper, that you are the most mistaken in the world,

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in that foolish poem of yours about matrimony,—and those who go into the garden with the God of Love,—and all that. For I was married full five weeks ago, (all but two days), to my dear Mr Mignonette, and we are still the happiest couple alive. I wish you could see Mr Mignonette,—you would so like him. We have found none of those frightful ugly things which you speak of, in that same garden, and can assure you, you have been imposed upon. And my dear Mr Mignonette is so sweet, and kind, and civil to me, as you can't think:—and yet it is now almost a whole week past the honeymoon. And he tells me, that all our moons shall be honeymoons. So, do make haste to correct your mistake, and believe me, Dear Mr Keeper, yours very affectionately,

"FANNY TINDER."

"P. S. My mamma did not approve of Mr Mignonette; but I assure you, Mr Keeper, she never could give me any satisfactory reasons for it;—and besides, I was sixteen so long ago as October last. I protest I have signed my maiden name; but I have not yet got into the way of being called Mrs Mignonette."

"2d P. S. Do let me know where you live, and I will bring Mr Mignonette to see you. I looked over the whole *Directory*, but could not find you. I then asked the postman, but he only laughed."

"3d P. S. If you are not very *very* old indeed, I would advise you to think of a wife, before it be too late."

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"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—I am now arrived at an age which leads me to spend more of my thoughts on my past experience, than on my future prospects, in this world; and to contemplate life through the medium of reason, rather than that of fancy or passion:—yet, I think, I have lost nothing of the kindliness of my feelings towards my fellow creatures, or of my endeavours to do them good. I have been, for a great part of my life, a wife and mother; and in both characters have enjoyed as much happiness, as is perhaps compatible with our imperfect condition here. I have read the poem which you lately published on the subject of Marriage with pleasure; because, on comparing it with my own experience, I thought it founded in truth. My own union, I must rank under the last of the conductors to your garden; whom I would distinguish by the name of *Rational Love* rather than *Esteem*;—as I would, his little competitor, by that of *Romantic Love*. The happy results which you describe, I have felt; and the conclusion I draw from the whole is,—that, of all dispositions of the mind, that of *Constancy* is the one most likely to insure happiness in the married state. This quality is, in some degree, voluntary; and may be much promoted by a fixed resolution and expectation, on both sides, to have an entire community of thoughts, of sympathies, of interests, of worldly chances, of cares, and enjoyments. Though married young, my hus-

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band and I had been long acquainted before our union; and till the end of his life, no suspicion or difference ever clouded the serenity of our perfect love. I need not describe what I felt at our separation. My only comfort, since that time, hath been the remembrance of our endearments,—the care of our children,—and the fixed hope of our being one day re-united for ever. The lines which I now send you, were written by my husband soon after our marriage; and express that sentiment of unchanging love which I have recommended, and which he truly possessed. They may therefore all be taken as sober truth, except the compliments to my person; which, though not without some foundation, you may suppose are much exaggerated:—but you will make allowance for the usual failing of youth, love, and poetry. I subscribe myself, by the name under which I am there addressed, your constant reader,

"STELLA."

STANZAS ADDRESSED TO A LADY.

"STELLA, those auburn locks of thine
Will turn to thin and grey;
That bloom which makes the rose repine
Will wrinkle and decay;
Those eyes, like midnight stars that shine,
Will fade as fast as they.

"That smile where April's blushes glow,
And dimples overspread;

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That ivory neck, that polish'd brow,
Those lips so moist and red,
Must yield to the remorseless foe
Who strikes all beauty dead.

"Nor may his flight, which mocks recall,
By gifts or vows be bought,
To spare this hand so soft and small,
Those limbs so finely wrought,
That form which realizes all
That Grecian artists thought.

"No, stealing fast o'er every grace,
His tooth will all devour;
Each charm of motion, form, or face,
Attends its fated hour;
Till of thy beauties live no trace
To tell their former power.

"Yet shall not all the lustre go
Which radiates in thine eyes;
That Soul which gives their purest glow
Material power defies;
And still, as nearer Heav'n, will show
Diviner beauties rise.

"And ev'n when age those lips shall soil,
And falter in that tongue;
Each tender word, each wonted smile,
Th' enchantment will prolong;
And Love, his reckoning lost the while,
Will dream thou still art young."

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## XX. A MEDICAL CONSULTATION.

[*SUAVITER IN MODO.*]

Ægrescitque medendo.
VIRG.

MY readers have already been made acquainted with my good friend Mr Megrim's intention of trying the air of our metropolis; and the many doubts and misgivings which beset him in the contemplation of so serious a design. He at length, however, summoned up resolution to set out; and actually reached town, without material damage to himself or family. I had, with the assistance and approbation of his privy counsellor Jacob Steady, procured for him a house; which, though far from uniting in itself that compendium of perfections set forth in his letter, was, however, quiet and commodious. And therein,—after a week's labour of carpenters, upholsterers, plasterers, glaziers, door-hangers, smoke-curers, and all others who minister in the correction of the flaws and blemishes incident to the mansions of man,—he might at length be considered as settled.

I went to call on him, a few mornings afterwards, and on the door being opened by Jacob, I asked after his master. "O sir, but very middling," replied Jacob,—with the look of accustomed ruefulness which he adapts to such inquiries,—"very middling indeed. He was amused and taken up last week with the workmen; but now that he has had time to settle himself, it's all the old way again. We are expect-

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ing the doctor to-day at twelve o'clock."—"Any thing particular the matter Jacob?"—"No, sir, not that a body can call particular—but just the old ailing way like:—my lady indeed was saying, that the egg for his breakfast yesterday, was rather hard boiled, and lay on his stomach. But, for my part, I really do not think there could be much in that;—for I ate three that were left myself, and never would have known it. But to be sure his honour is easily discommoded."—"Got a little cold perhaps, Jacob, in coming to a new house"—"Aye, sir, very possible—very possible—though really, in a manner, one can hardly see how the cold could get at him either: for we've got the house well stopped, and nailed down all the windows: And when his honour goes out to his airing in the carriage, he puts on the big duffle-cloak, and a shawl of my lady's;—besides Shetland hose, and a bottle of hot water at his feet;—so it's really a particularity, sir, as a body may say, how the cold can get at him."—"I had better go at present, Jacob, and return after the consultation is over."—"O no, sir;—his honour will be glad to see you:—he's the better of somebody to speak to, when he's badly. My lady is just mixing up some powders for him:—just walk in, sir."

On this encouragement I proceeded; and was shown into my friend's bed-chamber, where I found him seated in an easy chair, before a large fire, in his night-cap and flannel-gown. On the chimney-piece, and sides of the grate, were bestowed sundry phials, boxes, and tea-cups; and on the hearth stood a small

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pan containing a remnant of liquor, and a few fragments of cinnamon, and lemon skins, which had been boiled up together. His careful spouse stood over a little table in a window, unfolding certain packages of powders, which she was mixing up with black currant jelly. She had that air of busy satisfaction which bespeaks one being engaged in an agreeable employment. A pair of medicine scales stood on the table beside her, and divers bowls, basins, gallipots, and kettles, were scattered about in different corners of the room. Jacob entered along with me, and remained; as he generally bears an important part in all the medical consultations and preparations of the family.

"Well, sir," said I, on seating myself, "how do you find yourself?"—"Why, my good friend, indifferent enough:—Jacob, see that the door be thoroughly shut, and lay the matting across, and draw the screen—there is a vile cold air:—Indifferent enough indeed—I fear this movement I have ventured upon, to your town, has been an undertaking above my strength.—Then, after all my pains, I still feel a cross draft of air through the house."—"Really," returned I, "I should rather have said that this room felt close."—"O no, sir; you who are robust may think so; but you have no conception of the feelings of an invalid. Then the fatigues of last week, in doing necessary things about the house, have been too much for me. Jacob, did you call about the drops?"—"Yes, sir, but the apothecary's man said he had got no orders about them, and that they would be time enough to-morrow."

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"*He said?*—what should he know about the matter?—blockhead! I really wonder my friend Dr Gruel could be so careless:—Indeed I have felt certain flushings, and flutterings of the pulse, this morning, which make me seriously dread an attack of fever."—"Pray," said I, "what may be the temperature of this room at present?"—"I have not yet got the thermometer put up;—but I see what you point at;—no, no, my friend, I am too familiar with the febrile symptoms, to mistake for them a mere increase of animal heat. Besides, Mrs Megrim has just been reading me a paragraph in your newspapers, as to the alarming spread of typhus, and putrid sore throat. I have felt a sort of awkwardness in swallowing these two days, and a tendency to a tickling about the thorax. It is even possible that some of the workmen, who were in the house last week, may have brought infection."—"Why, they all seemed well and hearty:—You remember when you were obliged to stop their singing for your headach."—"Aye, poor things, they did look well and happy enough. I could almost envy their boisterous health. Yet the seeds of disease will often lurk in the system; and the febrific or putrescible *miasmata* are highly volatile and penetrating. Indeed, there was one of the men that had a flushed and hectic look: You remember I pointed him out to you."—"Yes—the hectic of good beef and beer:—That was the amount of his distemperature. Indeed, my friend, I would recommend you to throw off some of those wrappings, and open the window."

At this proposal, Mr Megrim stared at me, as if

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I had advised him to swallow a live scorpion. The lady, too, dropped the paper she was unfolding, and turning round to satisfy herself whether any thing in the shape of man could have imagined such an enormity. "O my good friend," said she, advancing to her husband's aid, "you have really no idea of the feelings of a delicate frame. It would be his death. —It would be the death of both of us. It is a great mercy, indeed, that I have kept up so well, while Mr Megrim is indisposed. But we thought it as prudent to send for our friend Dr Gruel, for fear of the worst. He commonly calls about mid-day."

At this moment the doctor's carriage drove up, and soon after he was shown into the room. I made a motion to depart, but Mr Megrim entreated I would stay, as nothing was to pass but what a friend might hear. The Doctor, after saluting us all in the most gracious manner, sat down beside his patient, and asked him how he found himself, and how he had rested all night. "Indeed, Doctor, but poorly; I slept very ill. I dare say I lay awake two hours in the course of the night—Did'nt I, my dear?"—"Indeed, my dear, I dare say you did—though to be sure, you went early to bed; and had, besides, a nap in the afternoon."—"O no, my dear, a mere doze—you could not call it a nap. Indeed, I cannot say that I have had a proper night's rest for this week past."—"How is your appetite, sir?" said the Doctor; "O, very slender—very slender. But I force myself to eat pretty often, by way of making up for this"—"Aye, that's right," continued the Doctor, "quite proper. It is better not to overload

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the stomach at once. Will you let me look at your tongue?—Aye—a little on the white I see,—but nothing very material. And how is the pulse to-day?" added the doctor, taking his wrist. "Why doctor, I fear not satisfactory. I have been trying it, from time to time, by a stop watch, ever since breakfast: Hurried and intermitting, I fear, doctor."—"No, not precisely so.—I would rather say it was steady,—pretty steady —a little languid, but steady."—"Nothing feverish think you, doctor? I had apprehensions of febrile symptoms."—"No, I cannot actually say there is fever—there may be a slight tendency—a predisposition,.as we say,—but not actual fever:—there is a little heat on the surface of the skin no doubt."—"Why, my friend there alleges that the room is too warm, and actually proposes to me to open the window."—"Why it may be," rejoined the doctor,—(who, being somewhat short and pursy, was absolutely gasping for breath),—"that there is a small excess of temperature in the room. But we must not be rash. Perhaps, when the weather gets a little milder, and you feel somewhat stronger, you might admit a little of the fresh air at mid-day, by way of ventilation or so;—when you are out at your airing, you know: But I would do nothing rashly. Have you been taking any thing?"—"Only a little magnesia, and one or two other common things, from my own medicine chest."—"Very right—very right. But you should be cautious of proceeding without advice. Have you tried the drops I ordered?"—"Why, doctor, they never came: When I sent my servant for them,

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they were not ready."—"Really I am sorry for that:—I wonder my friend Mr Gargle could be so negligent:—I cannot imagine how such a thing:—but I will take care that they be sent before dinner. I will add a few pills to be taken at bed-time: and we shall see how you are to-morrow."—"What would you recommend for dinner, doctor?"—"Why, a little veal-broth,—or the wing of a chicken,—or any light thing. What does your own inclination point to?" "I am fond of puddings, doctor."—"Very good—a little bit of plain pudding will do you no harm—none in the world."—"And as to wine, doctor?"—"O, a glass of wine or so—good port, or old sound Madeira—you may venture on that—I know you will not exceed."—"I think, doctor," said my friend, giving a slight cough, "there is some cold in it too."—"Very likely—I dare say," rejoined the doctor, "a touch of the *Influenza* which is flying about:—I find it very common among my patients:—Just come this moment from my Lady Kitty Croak, who is in a manner quite closed up—absolutely wheezes like a raven. However, it only requires a little care:—But I believe I must bid you a good morning, sir. I will be sure to have the things sent before dinner."

When the doctor was gone, (having duly received his fee), Mr Megrim broke forth in his praise. What an intelligent, agreeable man he is;—so reasonable;—so considerate;—enters so much into the feelings of an invalid."—"Very true indeed," added his lady, "it is really a pleasure to be attended by such a medical man." In these encomiums I concurred;—adding,



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in my own mind, to the Doctor's other good qualities, that of prudence;—which taught him that the world must be taken as it goes;—and that it is unnecessary to discourage too rudely the whims of a hypochondriacal patient.

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## XXI. A MEDICAL CONSULTATION.

[*FORTITER IN RE.*]

Vere quod placet, ut non
Acriter elatrem, pretium ætas altera sordet.
HOR.

I CALLED, a few days after my last visit, on my friend Mr Megrim, to inquire after the *febrile symptoms;* and found him pretty much in the old way. He disclosed to me sundry alarming indications which had appeared, since I last saw him, in the body natural; although they had been kept in check by the happy application of medicines in due season. He was not, however, by any means, satisfied as to his present condition; and hinted that, although his confidence in his friend Dr Gruel was unshaken, still there might be some benefit in taking the light of a fresh mind on his case.—"Two heads, you know, my good friend, are better than one." I saw that he waited for some encouragement from me; and as I thought that a new consultation might amuse and occupy him, without doing harm to any body, I imme-



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diately assented to his opinion. "Were I to think of such a thing," continued he, "whom would you recommend? I have heard Dr Downright of your town much spoken of."—"None better," replied I—"I know him well; and know none superior in worth, talents, or accomplishments. But the Doctor is somewhat particular in his manner;—very free in his inquiries and communications;—some would even say *blunt*:—but of his skill there is no question: and I doubt not that you will get from him some excellent advice." Whether a certain peculiarity of look or tone, with which I pronounced these last words, struck my friend, I know not; but he seemed a little disconcerted; and shrunk back, as if from too rude a handling of his maladies. After a short pause, however, recovering himself, he said: "Well, surely, that is no objection:—one is always the better of knowing the truth:—I think I had as well see the Doctor."—"By all means," said I, "and if you will fix your day and hour, I shall be happy to come and introduce you to each other."—"Do, my dear friend:—And, indeed, as I have no secrets to tell, and you have long known my ailments, I would wish you to remain during the whole consultation:—it will make me much easier."—"With all my heart," said I,—"When shall it be?"—"Suppose we say Thursday next at eleven o'clock."—"Agreed," answered I.

On the appointed morning, I went to breakfast with Mr Megrim, that I might be in readiness when the Doctor called. I observed that my friend was a little fearful and fidgetty in the prospect of the inter-

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view; and his good lady, who had not been present when the consultation was settled, seemed to look at me with a slight expression of reproach; and dropped a hint, now and then, of the consideration due to the feelings of a delicate patient.

At length the Doctor arrived. He came along the passage with a firm and not very noiseless step; and the door was thrown open, by the obsequious Jacob, with a spirited bound, very different from his usual deliberate mode of admission. The Doctor, on entering, suddenly started back, as if struck with the *Sirocco*, or *Simoom* of the desert. "Heaven defend our lungs," cried he, "what a stifle:—pine-apple heat I'll be sworn:—pray, Sir, do you keep a pet salamander?"—I immediately rose, and performed the proper introductions, which the Doctor went through with perfect good humour, and a finished politeness towards the lady. Then, sitting down, he told several pleasant stories;—gave some happy classical quotations;—repeated epigrams;—and, in short, made us all so merry, that it looked like any thing but a medical consultation. At length, addressing Mr Megrim, he said, "Well, Sir, you have sent for me, I suppose, as a learned Leech,—able to advise in all disorders incident to men, women, and Jews. You see I have not much professional formality about me—not much of Moliere's doctors.—Still I am duly qualified to slay, *secundum artem*. Tell me, then, what is your ailment."—"Why, Doctor," replied my friend, "I really cannot say that my complaints bear a very precise character. I have, all my life, been of a feeble constitution. Amongother things,



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I feel my stomach a good deal out of order."—"I am afraid, sir, you give it too much to do."—"How do you mean, Doctor.—that I eat too much?"—The Doctor nodded.—"Alas, Sir, you are much mistaken," said Mr Megrim—("sadly mistaken indeed," murmured the lady)—why, Sir, I cannot say that I have actually dined—that is, what a man would call *dined*—this fortnight past."—"No, really?"—resumed the Doctor—"well that is hard:—but let us come a little more to particulars.—When do you begin to taste food in the morning?"—"Why I take the smallest drop of asses's milk (by advice) at six in the morning."—"By advice? aye, the best advice no doubt;—the two-legged Doctor recommends the four-legged. Well, what next?"—"Then I take nothing till breakfast, at ten o'clock."—"Absolutely nothing? what self-denial!—well, proceed—What does your breakfast consist of?"—"O nothing whatever but a French roll or two, and a bit of buttered toast:—sometimes an egg—with a cup of tea or chocolate."—"Nothing more? no accessories—no trash?"—"Oh, of course, everybody takes a bit of fresh butter?"—"O every body to be sure,—with the small exception of some nine-tenths of his Majesty's liege subjects. Well?"—"Perhaps a little sweetmeat, such as currant jelly or marmalade—but that, you know, is really nothing."—"Nothing whatever:—what next?"—"Why, I generally take a glass of wine, and a mouthful of soup, or cold meat, at two o'clock."—"Sad things those *mouthfuls*," said the Doctor;—"I have known them amount to a pretty swallow by the end of the year.—Well, any thing more

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before dinner?"—"Nothing—nothing more I assure you"—("nothing more indeed," threw in Mrs Megrim).—"Then dinner, what is that like?"—"O generally some very light thing—only plain food, roast, boil, or stew—with perhaps a bit of fish, and oyster sauce, (oysters agree with my stomach),—or now and then a lobster, or crab-pye—("*poison*," growled the Doctor); —and a morsel of tart or pudding to conclude with. That's all—all indeed—Doctor."—"No cheese, Sir—no fruit—no biscuit—no liquors?"—"O to be sure—nobody can do without those trifles. But I am very moderate—a mouthful of ale—a few glasses of wine—and now and then a sip of brandy I find useful as a cordial."—"Ah, Sir—again those *sips* and *mouthfuls*: —well—any tea in the evening?"—"Why, yes Doctor, I find a dish of tea refreshing—but I take little or nothing with it."—"Pray what does that *nothing* consist of—a slice of toast and butter?"—"Why yes."—"A little marmalade?"—"Sometimes."—"Sweet cake?"—"Occasionally:"—"Short-bread?" "Very seldom."—"The seldomer the better—well, have you done for the day?"—"O yes!—done,—as one may really say,—*done*;—only about ten I take a bit of any light pastry, or toasted cheese, with a tumbler of toddy,—for I have always heard that it was wrong to go to bed with an empty stomach"—("*Empty*," again muttered the Doctor, with a horrible grimace,) —"Though my friends rather recommend something more solid—and this suggestion is one of the things on which I should like to have your opinion."—"You shall have it, Sir," quoth the Doctor.

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The Doctor resumed—"Now, Sir, I suppose you have gone through the twenty-four hours, so far as regards diet:—what say you as to air and exercise?" "Why, I take a drive in my carriage every day, when the weather is tolerable, for nearly two hours."—"Very good, Sir.—Open windows doubtless—and a free circulation of air?"—"O no, Sir—I should get my death of cold—I keep all the windows close shut." "And then," said Mrs Megrim, "he often takes, besides this, several turns in the drawing-room before dinner."—"A great exertion truly Madam," replied the Doctor,—"but by no means excessive in the circumstances:—and this sums up the account of exercise."

"Now, Sir," continued the Doctor, "let me ask you one or two other questions. How is your appetite?"—"But so so."—"Your sleep?"—"Very indifferent."—"Spirits?"—"Feeble."—"Pulse?—come let me try:—Why languid, but pretty regular.—Well, Sir, have you any further particulars to communicate—any morbid symptoms?"—"Why no Doctor: I can't say I have."—"Then I suppose you want my opinion of your case, and advice what you shall do."—"Very much indeed, Doctor."—"I will tell you what to do.—You must contrive some way,—honest or dishonest,—by fair means, or by foul,—to get a month's hard labour on the Tread-mill. At the end of that period, believe me, you will come out a sound man."

My friend looked aghast;—and his poor lady remained quite speechless. At length he faintly articulated,—"You cannot be serious, Doctor."—"Seri-

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ous as Solomon, my good Sir. By your own confession, you swallow as much nourishment *per diem* as would keep two ploughmen in strength and labour; while you undergo perhaps the five-hundredth part of their bodily exertion. All that follows is a matter of course. To the Tread-mill, I own, I am partial, as a regulator both of diet and exercise:—but I am a reasonable man:—I will admit of equivalents. Perhaps it may do, if you hire yourself to break stones on the high-road, at sixpence a-day, and live upon your wages."—"Nay, my good Sir," rejoined the patient, "a truce with jokes, and speak of what is practicable."—"Well, as I am the mildest of despots, I will let you off with reducing your sustenance one-half, and increasing your exercise fifty fold.—But not a jot more will I bate.—And now, Sir, you have my whole science. Were I to preach a month, and range from Hippocrates to Cullen, I could add nothing to it. The rest remains with yourself. There is no royal road to health, any more than to mathematics. Burn your medical books:—discard your stop-watch:—and throw your gallipots over the window. Banish all doctors, except *Dr Temperance* and *Dr Exercise;* who, though but scurvy empirics, are yet cunning fellows in their way. If you act as I advise, you will probably get well;—if not, you must take the consequences. But I can do you no more good; and that being the case, I were a knave to come every day and take your money. So you must consider this as my first and last visit *en Medecin*. If I call again to inquire for you, it must be as a friend."

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Mr Megrim, still half bewildered, gave the Doctor his fee; and said he hoped, notwithstanding what had passed, that he would visit him again as a patient. The Doctor cordially shook hands with Mr Megrim and his lady, and, nodding familiarly to me, stalked out of the room.

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## XXII. BIBLIOMANIA.

Insanit veteres LIBROS* Damasippus emendo.
HOR.

In *Books*, not *Authors*, curious is my lord.
POPE.

I received a visit, some mornings ago, from my friend Dick Foolscap, who would have me to accompany him to an auction of rare books. Dick is one of those who make a great figure on the outworks of Literature, without ever caring to get into the citadel itself. He has a more general acquaintance than any man living, with all printers, venders, binders, exchangers, valuers, and other traders in books;—knows the contents of every catalogue, and the curious articles in all libraries of note;—is familiar with rare editions, and black letter copies;—can tell you whether the distinguishing mark of one, be the misprint of an L, or a T;—why the whole value of another lies in a flourish on the title-page;—will harangue,

* The common editions of Horace give this word *statuas*; but the above is the true reading, according to a rare MS. *penes me*.

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for half an hour together, on the merits of a genuine *Aldus* or *Caxton*;—and, to sum up all, is himself a very hardened collector.

Dick told me that the sale which he wished to carry me to, was that of the late Dr Lumber, a man of curious learning, and supposed to have picked up several rare pieces. I replied, that I had already got a tolerable library, consisting of the best authors, ancient and modern:—That any new books of value, I procured as they came out:—So that I really had neither motive nor inclination to spend my time at auctions. On this, Dick rose up, and opening one or two of the folding-doors of my book-case, began to run over the names of the books as they stood; taking out one, here and there, and looking into the title-page. His face, which at first betrayed a sort of slighting incredulity, gradually settled into an air of sovereign contempt,—with a certain toss of the head, as he returned each volume to its place:—At length, resuming his chair;—"My dear Sir," said he, "you have not a book worthy of a place in a gentleman's library,—mere every-day trash. I could show you half a dozen volumes in my collection worth all you have in the room."

I was somewhat nettled with this cavalier mode of rating my acquisitions, and drily answered, "That my books chiefly consisted of esteemed editions of the best authors;—that I considered the only use of books was to be read;—and that the rarity of a book was the sure proof of its worthlessness."—"O my good Sir," interrupted he,—"only use of books to be read!

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—Why you are as bad as the country miss in the play, who thinks that the only use of her eyes is to see with. But really when one lives too long out of the world, one falls so behind the current of one's age."—"Nay, but Dick," returned I, "be so kind as help me with a little of your improvement. By what rule do you estimate the value of a book?"—"O, if you seriously desire some knowledge of those things, I believe you could not apply better. I have long turned my thoughts this way, and should know a little of the matter. The value of a book then, in one word, consists in its rarity and antiquity. Where is the pleasure or glory of having what every one has, or may have when he chooses? No,—the thing is to possess what all the world cannot match. Then you become at once famous. Your name appears in catalogues, and is in the mouths of all *amateurs*. You are a figuring member of the Roxburgh or Bannatyne Club. The famous collection of Mr Such-a-one:—That rare copy or MS. *penes* Mr Such-another:—Then the bewitching aspect of colophons, black-letter, oaken boards, wood cuts, silver clasps, knobs, and rivets;—O, if you could but form an idea of the delight inspired by such things"—"Why truly Dick," replied I, "if one could begin by divesting themselves of common sense, much might be done towards getting a relish for this kind of gewgaw, or any other. But, in the mean time, I must own, that the passion seems to me a little incomprehensible. A taste for pictures and statues is another thing. Here the value consists in the beauty of workmanship, which has no

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limit; and whatever the price given, it is supposed to bear a proportion to the valuable quality. This quality besides cannot be multiplied. The value of a book, again, I take to consist in its merit as a composition; and if this were incommunicable, like the merit of a picture, there might be as little limit in its price. Were the Iliad of Homer confined to one possessor, —in the same manner as the Transfiguration of Raphael, or the Belvidere Apollo,—the book might perhaps be worth ten times the picture or the statue. But as this is fortunately not the case, why should I give a hundred guineas for a *princeps editio* of the old bard, when I can enjoy him, in equal perfection, for twenty shillings?" "Really," said Dick, "it is difficult to talk with persons who have such strange views of things. But do you count for nothing the collation of original copies,—tracing the progress of the arts,—preserving the monuments of past ages?"— "Far from it, Dick;—such objects have their value;— but I fear are of small account in making up the instinct of a true collector. But my friend, Dick, there is a better defence than you have yet hit upon. It was a doctrine of the ancient Brahmins, (as we learn from orientalists), that human nature, in its first concoction, required a certain leavening of folly to make it rise:—and mould, and knead, and squeeze it as you will, still this portion must remain. If it disappear in one place, it just bolts up in another. Now I grant that few manifestations of it are more harmless than the *Bibliomania*." "Pshaw!" cried Dick, "come along;—we shall be too late for the sale."

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My friend Dick's entrance into the auction-room created what is called a *sensation*; and he walked forward with that air of careless superiority which betokened his high character, and usage of the place. I followed him to the upper end of the table, where the great amateurs were collected; all the inferior powers making way as he passed. Here Dick was straightway surrounded by a crowd of inquirers, pointing out to him articles in the catalogue, or bringing odd volumes for his inspection and report. He gave judgment with great *nonchalance*, and an oracular brevity, which was quite conclusive. "That article, Sir, is a clever thing. It is not the prime copy of the year *seven*, which I happened to pick up lately;—but it is worth looking after."—"That, sir, is a mere bauble,—a display of modern type and paper, to catch the crowd. There are only nine of the genuine *Aldus* extant, one of them *penes me*. I gave *three hundred* for it:—Lord Littlewit, soon after paid *five*.—That thing, Mr Addle,"—speaking to a grave elderly gentleman,—"if you can get for *fifty*, you may take. But I would not go further:—I can put you on a way of getting another, for about that sum."—Thus did my friend Dick go on, dealing out the reputation and fortunes of all that was submitted to him; and his responses, I found, were received as infallible. In the mean time, the sale was proceeding; and by favor of his patronage, I was admitted to a seat among the great luminaries; one of whom whispered me, that it was my singular good fortune to have the intimacy of such a judge as Mr Foolscap, in making up my collection. I protest-

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ed, I had no such design; but little did I know the footing on which matters stood with me at that moment.

It was some time before I discovered that there was a sort of mute hieroglyphical commerce carried on between Dick and the auctioneer, by means of winks, nods, and significant looks;—so that he had been bidding actively, on many occasions, without the sound of his voice being ever heard. He, once or twice, on an article being put up, whispered that it was just a thing for me;—and in spite of the strongest negation on my part, he continued bidding, till many lots were knocked down to me at extravagant prices. In this way,—notwithstanding every remonstrance,—did he run me up a score of *fifty-three pounds* (besides auction-duty) for what I truly would have thought overpaid by as many pence. His friends, however, gathered round me at the end, and congratulated me on having picked up some very curious articles for almost nothing.

It amused me to remark, that the laws which prevail in the great system of nature, act with equal steadiness in the little world of an auction-room. There were the same combinations, and tricks, and contrivances,—the same eagerness of pursuit, and mutual jealousies, and plots to over-reach, and triumphs of success,—as we observe in the great business of life. I could perceive also that harmonious gradation so conspicuous in the frame of society. There was an upper sphere, where the great amateurs and high bidders moved; and below them was a subordinate region, occupied

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by more vulgar competitors,—a species of Jackals who took what was left by the Lions of Literature. While these underlings maintained their petty warfare, the grandees would look on with a placid indulgence,—as you might suppose those heroes, *Crib* or *Belcher*, to regard the boxing of two school-boys. But if any of the inferior powers presumed to offer at the great game, it was resented as an invasion of prerogative, and resisted by a combined opposition; which either foiled the intruder in his object; or,—what was a far greater evil,—made him gain it at a ruinous cost.

When the sale was over, Dick settled my account with the auctioneer by some of those *mimetic signals* which I have before described—(all I mean but the *payment*, which was left to myself at a future opportunity)—and we departed together. It will be easily believed, that I was not in the best humour, when I thought of the dance he had led me. However, as it was past remedy, I resolved to put the best face on the matter; and only take care how I again trusted myself at a sale with an amateur. "Well, Dick," said I, "you have had amends of me for my jokes." —"Pshaw! my dear sir,—how can you talk so?— But I hope your good luck to-day will really give you a turn for such elegant pursuits.—In the mean time, you shall go home with me, and I will show you a few things that must needs make an impression."

On getting into his library, he took down about a dozen volumes from different shelves, and placed them on a table in the middle of the room.—"You talk," said he, "of your expense to-day. What do

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you think those few volumes have cost me?"—As their aspect was none of the most engaging, I was about to commit some grievous blunder in my estimate; when Dick,—to save my credit, and his own feelings,—brought his MS. catalogue, where the prices were affixed to each article. Some of these I noted in my pocket-book, and will now give them for the edification of my readers.

" *Twentie Godlie Ballades*, sette to divers tunes, facete and pleasaunte: Also *Twelve gentil Receiptes of Cokery* in rhyme: with rules for the choicing and ordering of Metes and Viandes, delectabil to the Palate.—William Caxton.—1487.—Black letter.—32 pages—5 wanting—7 defaced.—Rare and curious, . . . . . L. 137 '9 8

" *Boethius his Consolatioune of Philosophie*, drawn into this our Englische Tung by a Personne of Honoure, —1498,—Wynkyn de Worde.—With Colophon.—Rare, . . . . . L. 175 3 3

" The true and veritabil Historie of the Lyfe and Exploictes of the invincible *Jhone*, commonly callit *Jacke the Giante-Killer, or Queller*.—Black letter.—MS. Notes and *Scholia*.—With heads of the Giants after decapitation,—very lively,—unique, L. 156 17 2

" The Holy Bible, printed in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord, King Charles I.,—wanting the *negative* in the Seventh Commandment.—Opens *ad loc.*—Tall copy.—Oak boards, knobs, and clasps.—Very precious, . . . . . L. 235 16 0

" *Satan's Invisible Worlde discovered*.—Emprinted for the Auctor, Maister George Sinclar.—Edinburgh, 1685.—Richly illuminated,—with likenesses of the

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Devils.—Tails double gilt.—Superior copy.—Original parchment boards, . . L. 53 4 10

" *Chaunces and Changes*, or the *Maiden's Garlande*, being sondrie fearfull and delectabil Ballades, Dittyes, and Roundelays, touching Virgins that died for Love.—Emprinted by Walter Chepman and Andro Miller,—Edinburgh, 1512.—Curious, L. 88 9 0

" The true and wonderfulle Actes and Gestes of that Famous Worme the *Dragonne of Wantlye*; with the vanquishing and putting down of the same, by that renowned Knighte, More of Morehall.—With illuminations.—Dragon very fierce, L. 62 5 7

" The *Sole-Scraper*, or Man rescued from out the Puddle of Papistrie.—Emprinted by Maister Robert Lekprevick.—Edinburgh, 1567.—20 pages.—7 damaged.—Scarce, . . L. 73 7 2."

I had proceeded thus far in my examination, when Dick, taking me to his book-case, showed me, with an air of triumph, an *Elzevir* edition of the Latin classics. " Here," said I, " we agree:—and I cannot but congratulate you on the pleasure of reading those great authors, in a form at once elegant and correct." —" Reading!"—exclaimed he, with a look of horror: —" Do you absolutely think me such a barbarian?" —With that, reaching down several of the volumes, he showed me that the leaves had never been cut open. —" No,"—continued he;—" It is the unique copy in Europe.—The use of an ivory knife would at once degrade that precious gem to the level of a common library."—" Well, Dick," said I,—" I see we shall never be of one mind on this subject, so I humbly take my leave."



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## XXIII. THE ROYAL VISIT.

[AUGUST 1822.]

Salve secundâ digna dies notâ!
BUCHANAN.

THE usual autumnal quiet of our fair city has been lately interrupted by nothing less than the prospect of a Royal Visit. As a good subject, and patriotic Caledonian, I rejoice at this; though the occasion has given rise to certain troubles and agitations in the calm haven of my family which bode me some annoyance. The first symptoms appeared in an unusual seriousness, and importance of manner, in my sister Judith. She went about with the air of one intent on high designs;—mingled, now and then, with a cast of suspicion towards me, as one likely to thwart and impede them. Then arose a mighty cackling and gossipping between our servants and those of the adjoining houses, carried on from the upper windows, or at the top of the kitchen staircase; in many of which colloquies, I observed that my little nephew bore a part. From him the report soon reached me, *that they were all about the King coming*.

Presently my sister's bosom friend and counsellor, Miss Primley, came huddling to the house, soon after breakfast; and they were straightway closeted together. After a long conference, as she was leaving the room, she stood some time, in the earnestness of con-



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versation, with the door ajar, and I could overhear the following dialogue:—"But then, what will you do for *lappets?*"—"*Lappets?*"—re-echoed my sister:—"To be sure, my dear,—there is no doing without *lappets*;—Point lace, you know:—Just such things as they wore long ago:—Not that I have any remembrance of them:—But such things as you see in the old old pictures,—fifty or sixty years ago,—long before we were born."—"O aye," returned Judith, "I know what you mean:—I recollect my mother showing me such things when I was quite a child:—I am not sure but I may find some among her laces;—and the *Train*, you say, Two yards."—"*Two* at the very least, some say *Three*.—But I will see you again in the evening."

The murder was now out. Judith was absolutely going to Court. I set myself seriously to ruminate on this piece of vanity, and determined to remonstrate with her on the subject. At least, thought I, whatever fooleries she chooses to commit, in her own person, she shall not get me to be either a partaker or spectator of them.

"My dear Judith," said I, meeting her soon after,—"I overheard part of your conversation with Miss Primley this morning."—"Well Sir," answered she drily:—"No one, I am sure," continued I, "feels more than I do his Majesty's gracious purpose in thus visiting us, and reviving the proud recollections of an ancient Court and Kingdom;—and nothing that we can do is too much to testify our grateful sense of it. All public shows and processions, on the occasion, I

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shall take care to get you the means of seeing:—But really, my dear, to think of decking yourself out for Court, at your years——" "Brother," interrupted she, with some asperity,—"I really do not know what you mean:—Fifty persons, double my age, will be there."—[My sister was baptized, per Register, 15th April 1771;]—"and I think it would be using his Majesty very unkindly, and inhospitably,—and even disloyally,—not to go. Indeed, brother, I hope you will go yourself. It will be taken very ill,—and look very odd,—I assure you,—if you do not. There is your old friend Sir Humphry Hobbletoe, who has not a foot to stand on with the gout;—he has come all the way from the country, to be presented at the levee."—Here our dialogue ended for the present.

Finding matters in such a hopeful train within doors, I resolved to issue forth, and see what aspect they bore without. In passing along the streets, I could discover a general air of bustle and preparation in every body I met. Here were glaziers scrubbing windows;—there tinsmiths carrying lamps to and fro, for the approaching illumination:—Here was heard the rattling of boards, and thumping of hammers, for the erection of scaffolds to see the procession:—Then came heavy ordnance, shaking the pavement, to be wheeled up for a saluting battery on the Calton Hill. In the midst of these coarser operations, were to be seen sempstresses, and milliner girls, tripping with band-boxes;—and crowds of equipages at the fashionable shops;—indicating that the more ami-



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able half of our species were not altogether indifferent on the approaching occasion.

As I passed down the High Street, I saw two grave citizens conversing at their shop-doors. "It will be a fine sight for the young folks," says one. "In troth," says the other, "I think it will turn the heads of both young and old. My wife's every bit as mad as the *bairns*. She will have me get a new coat, with the *welcome* buttons,—as she calls them,—and a sprig of heather in my hat."—"But is't really true that he is to come with ten gilt barges in his train?"—"So they say:—and the Lord Provost is to go down the *Firth* to meet him,—with the *Trades' Blue Blanket*, that came from the Holy Wars,—and a nosegay of thistles in his hand."

On turning into the South Bridge, I passed two pretty young creatures, talking earnestly together on the steps of a perfumer's shop,—their eyes and complexions animated with hope and occupation:—"But what a mercy it is those odious hoops are abolished."—"O frightful, yes.—But, do you know, I have got the sweetest set of laces sent me by Grandmamma from the country;—true *Mechlin*, with flowers and open-work, you know.—But who presents you?"—"O I don't know yet:—I suppose Lady Plume:—But I have a million of things to think of before that."

In coming down another street, I fell in with two porters, one of whom rested his load against the railing, while the other, holding by his button, expatiated on the approaching event. The speaker had been anticipating his Majesty's welcome in a glass or two; and held forth

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very copiously, learnedly, and inarticulately. "I've just been down, Robin lad, to the Palace of Holyrood with a hamper,—and I know all about it:—And the King is to walk on a white satin carpet, flowered with gold, all the way from the Palace to the Castle,—in a Tartan plaid and philibeg, with his crown on his head, and his sceptre in his hand:—The true Scotch crown, lad, that lies in the Castle,—all diamonds and rubies, as thick as slate-stones.—And then he is to drink a glass of Scotch whisky,—true Glenlivet, man,—to the health of the good Town,—and throw the glass backwards—back over his shoulder, like,—clean over the Half-moon battery:—And to make the Provost a Baron and a Knight:—And I saw one of the Gentlemen Yeomen *Beef-eaters*, as they call them,—that came down from London by the mail;—all scarlet and gold:—and a jolly proper man, too, he was,—and was quite agreeable like,—and shook hands with me as hearty as could be;—and I invited him, the first time he could spare, to take a half-mutchkin with me at Lucky MacWham's in Leith Wynd."

No class of society, however, seemed to assume more interest or dignity on this occasion than the footmen,—expecting doubtless to fill an important part in the approaching solemnities. A few of those belonging to the nobility had seen courts and drawing-rooms in London; and had figured in bags and state-liveries. It was quite edifying to remark the airs of experienced instruction, and protection, which they vouchsafed towards their less enlightened brethren.

In my further progress, I met my friend Mr Home-

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ly, a person sober in his habits, and much about my own years. Our conversation fell on the only topic; —and after moralizing on the bustle and vanity around us, my friend at last,—with some awkwardness and hesitation,—asked me if I had any thoughts of going to Court. "Why truly, my good friend," said I, "I think your court-days and mine are pretty well over now."—"True,—very true," replied he, "nothing can be more disagreeable to me than such a display. But, at the same time, there is a propriety, and a duty one owes, you know."——This sense of duty I have found very lively and general among my graver friends at present.

Scarcely had I parted from Mr Homely, when I beheld, at a little distance, two young gentlemen talking together, with a degree of grimace and gesticulation unusual in our phlegmatic northern temperaments. On coming nearer, I found they were endeavouring to describe to each other, the dress they were severally to wear, in honour of his Majesty. One was to be a noble Celt, in belted plaid and philibeg: The other was to assume the garb of bold Robin, and the merrymen of Sherwood. As I approached them, the archer, in motioning to draw his bow, stepped back with such a prance as to invade my gouty toe: While the mountaineer, in rehearsing a flourish of his claymore, narrowly missed unsettling some of my foreteeth.

On getting home, and quietly examining into the state of my own constitution, I began to think that I discovered symptoms of the general contagion. Well.

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thought I, after all, I believe it is more safe, on such occasions,—as well as more agreeable,—*insanire solennia*. If all the rest of the world be out of their wits, why should I continue sober?

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## XXIV. THE ROYAL VISIT.

Missa per innumeros sceptra tueris avos.
BUCHANAN.

THE important day at length arrived, (being Thursday the 15th of this auspicious month of August), when his Majesty made his public entrance into the metropolis of his ancient kingdom. The brilliancy of a morning, which seemed nearer akin to summer than to autumn, began the general welcome. But, independently of all interest from the splendour of the spectacle, there were associations connected with this event, well calculated to impress the mind. A loyal people recognise, in the person of their monarch, the representative of their country. The August Personage now about to appear, was lineally descended from our native princes;—those princes who reigned while Scotland was an independent kingdom,—proud, and warlike, and jealous of her glory. He was entitled to share in the compliment paid by Buchanan to the beautiful Mary; when, in the prime of her youth and fortunes, that elegant poet saluted her as the *Descendant of a countless race of Kings*. Two centuries had nearly passed away since their ancient palace

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had been graced with the presence of its masters:—More than that period had elapsed, since it had ceased to be their permanent abode. The mind was involuntarily carried back to the days when these Royal Halls had blazed with pageantry, and resounded to the dance and song, under the Jameses, a heroic and accomplished race of princes. The same splendours graced the coming of Mary; but were suddenly and sadly overcast with contention, and crime, and sorrow. The memory of our ancient story,—with all its glories and misfortunes,—crowded on the mind; and added its interest to the passing hour.

The recollection, thus returning to former years, traced down the course of time, and contemplated our annals after we had lost the presence of our sovereigns. It there beheld a dreary blank:—a century of stagnation:—only interrupted by intestine broils, and religious persecution:—A country poor, oppressed, and unimproving;—a people discontented and desponding;—a city ill-built, incommodious, and stationary;—all the arts and habitudes of life rude and imperfect. What a contrast did this picture present to the scene around! A city trebled in size within our own remembrance:—in splendour of building, and excellence of accommodation, rivalling any in Europe. The superb features of its natural landscape improved by all the richness of useful and ornamental culture. The whole of Scotland, indeed, advanced, within the last half century, in domestic opulence, improvement, and comfort, with a rapidity perhaps unequalled in any long-settled country in the world. When, to all

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these causes of pride and thankfulness, were added religious peace and freedom,—an undisputed title to the crown,—the extinction of ancient feuds and heart-burnings,—and an accomplished Monarch thus coming amongst us, to behold our prosperity, and receive our respectful homage;—it is no wonder that, amidst such ample food for thought and feeling, this day should be hailed with a deeper interest than could arise from the mere outward splendours of the scene.

Brimful, then, of such reflections, forth I sallied, on this eventful day, immediately after breakfast, to make my observations on all that passed. My first care was to bestow my sister and little nephew, with a party of friends, in one of those numerous receptacles for gazers which had been erected in all quarters. Here, however, having deposited them safely, under the charge of one or two gentlemen, I took my leave. The object of my curiosity being the spectators, as much as the spectacle; this I thought could be attained by locomotion better than rest.

The first and most striking circumstance was the general aspect of the scene,—the universal stir of preparation throughout the city. No hive of bees, in a May morning, were ever more earnest or more busy. Here a squadron of gallant Greys were patrolling:—There a band of sturdy celts, with claymore and moon-like shield, were hastening to their parade:—Here ran a young archer, adjusting his quilled ruff, and white satin bow-case:—There scampered a stout yeoman, spurring his steed towards the place of muster:—Anon passed a solemn cavalcade of coaches, containing dig-

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nitaries going to join the procession:—Then rattled up a gay equipage, full of ladies, impatient to secure their places. To these were joined shoals of pedestrians, of every sex, age, and degree,—urging their way, from all points of the compass, towards their several places of resort.—Here an ancient matron conducted a charge of unruly imps, who sorely vexed her by extravagating beyond command:—There a worthy citizen, in his best wig, plodded along, with his wife and daughter on each arm:—Here a goody, with her basket of gingerbread, vociferated against younkers who had dislodged her store, as they scampered past:—There bauled a hoarse-lunged Stentor, vending bills of the procession:—Anon you stumbled over a suckling, not three feet high, garbed like a highlander from top to toe.—"Where are you going?"—"I'm going to the *barrier*—that's the real place for seeing—where he gets the keys of the city."—"O no—there's no place like the Register Office, where he comes within three yards of you,—I've got a private ticket."—"For my part, I say, the Calton Hill,—just under Nelson's monument."—"Well, I'm off to Leith, to see him land—that's worth all the rest put together."

But to take things more methodically;—that is, to describe the method I followed myself. I first repaired to York Place and Queen Street, where the various component parts of the gallant show were assembling. I beheld the gorgeous display of the Lord High Constable, with his steeds and esquires:—The Lord Lion, King-at-arms, with his coronet and mantle:—The Knight-Marischal, and his brilliant *fol-*

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*lowing:*—Together with divers other ornate and costly personages, who brought all the Arabian Tales before my sight. From this I proceeded to the *barrier*, at the head of Leith Walk;—where thousands, and tens of thousands, were conglomerated, on scaffolds, into a gazing mass,—reaching from the streets to the very eaves of the houses. All seemed in good humour. Bursts of laughter arose, from time to time, as any practical joke passed among the crowd. At every open window, fair ladies were planted, like flower-beds, in all the colours of the spring. Meanwhile, the multitude below was thickening into a stagnant mass. Sometimes a lagging party were seen painfully working their way towards their appointed rendezvous:—Here two ragged boys fought for the occupancy of a lamp-post:—There a guileless rustic, whose dusty shoes betrayed his walk from the country, munching an apple, gazed vacantly on the scene around.

As the pressure now became extreme, I made my way to the top of the Calton Hill, where a new scene opened. Groups stood gazing through spy-glasses at the royal yacht, which was moored off Newhaven. The landscape lay before us in all the richness of early autumn. The sea was living sapphire;—fading, as it opened to the east, into a pale and silvery gleam. Its islands lay like gems on its quiet bosom. The summit of the hill was covered with tents, and planted with a battery of ordnance, to give the Royal Guest a pealing welcome to the land. As I came near the guns, I met a sentinel pacing to and fro, with one of his comrades. "They talk," said he, "of your Greys,

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and your hussars, and what not;—but, for my part, I think the Artillery should have guarded his Majesty,—being that we are the more honourabler corps."

On looking to the south, I beheld the whole heights of Salisbury Rock studded with an encampment. The last which was pitched there, and in the adjacent valley, was that of the unfortunate Charles Edward, in the year 1745;—a circumstance which formed none of the least striking contrasts in the present scene. Beneath stood, in calm and pensive majesty, the ancient Palace, with its Chapel beautiful in ruins: whilst, before and around it, the new-trimmed walks, the throng of sentinels, and crowd of equipages, bespoke a return to long-suspended life and use. From this point ascended the grotesque slope of roofs and chimneys, which surmounts the ancient city, till it gradually rose to the crowning height of the Castle, with its towers and battlements. All this varied amphitheatre, beheld from the summit where I stood,—and brightened by a radiant sun,—needed neither the partialities of patriotism, nor the associations of the day, to fill the spectator with delight.

The guns now pealing from the Castle,—and repeated from Salisbury Crag, and the Calton Hill,—announced that the King had landed. I descended by the north-east shoulder of the hill to Leith Walk; whose noble length, amplitude, and straightness, seem to have destined it for the approach of a Monarch to his capital. Here,—standing on the side-path, without pressure or inconvenience,—I saw the gorgeous cavalcade pass by. The particulars I cannot stop to de-

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scribe: But its most distinguishing aspect was the picturesque and romantic air, derived from the variety of look and garb among those who formed the procession. It brought to my mind what we are told of the appearance of a Polish Diet. Altogether, nothing could be more splendid,—more various,—more suitable,—better conducted,—or better seen. While the graceful manner in which the Sovereign returned the greetings of his people, completed the interest and elegance of the whole.

I followed the royal carriage at a little distance, and saw it reach the *barrier*. Here a general burst of acclamation,—*loud as from numbers without number*,—rent the air. Hats, handkerchiefs, shawls, boughs of trees, waved from the scaffolds, the roofs, and the windows. Our orderly and quiet people seemed transformed by enthusiasm; but amidst their hearty congratulations, nothing absurd or unbecoming appeared. Finding all access barred in this direction, I turned to re-ascend the hill by the path which I had used in coming down. A general rush of people had taken the same course before me; and as I looked towards the hill, the whole of its steep northern side was covered with living creatures, crawling up like mice. On reaching the southern slope, I descended to the paved road; and looking back, beheld the whole hill-side, from east to west, covered with an unspeakable multitude, packed as close as hiving bees;—but from the ample space, and easy slope of the hill, without danger or pressure. Feeble old men, and women with infants in their arms, stood uninjured. Universally pleased in their looks, and comfort-

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able in their dress and appearance, no sight could be more grand, or more exhilarating.

Here, again, the procession passed in all its slow magnificence. When it came in sight of this mountain of human beings, their mingled shout was sublime. The cavalcade kept moving down till it reached the ancient towers of the Palace. At length the royal carriage stopped at the front gate; and again the pealing ordnance announced that the Monarch had entered the Palace of his ancestors.

Thus ended this noble and pleasing solemnity. The multitude began to return homewards, in detached groups, all happy, eager, and loquacious. Each expatiated on his good fortune in obtaining the most perfect view; and gave shrewd hints that he had attracted, in his proper person, the peculiar regards of Royalty.

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## XXV. THE ROYAL VISIT.

——— In regia ducit
Tecta. VIRG.

Ipsius at sedes, quacunque opulenta recessit
Regia, fulgenti splendent auro, atque argento;
Tota domus gaudet regali splendida gazâ.
CATULL.

As I was sitting in my library, ruminating on the auspicious events recorded in my last paper, I was alarmed by the fall of something heavy on the floor

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of the room above, accompanied by a loud shriek. As I knew it to be my sister's bed-chamber, I rushed up stairs, and opening the door, beheld my poor Judith half-raised from the ground, and supported by her own maid,—while Miss Primley was busy chafing her temples, and holding a scent-bottle to her nose. She gradually recovered herself; and, with my assistance, was supported to a chair;—where, leaning back, she said, in a faint voice, that it was nothing, and she was not in the least hurt. I was much relieved by hearing her speak, and observing the general symptoms of revival which she showed; and I now, for the first time, recognised a very curious appendage attached to both ladies,—namely, a breakfast table-cloth, pinned to the tail of their gowns. This,—added to the shock and alarm I had received,—so bewildered me, that I gazed,—first at the one, and then at the other,—without speaking a word; and at length merely got out,—"Bless me! What is this?—What has been the matter?"

Both ladies seemed rather shy of answering; but my sister's woman, Mrs Kitty, who, as already mentioned, had assisted at this privy council, broke in—"O, sir, it's nothing:—just nothing at all, sir:—only my lady and Miss Primley, you know, sir, just before getting home their Court dresses, sir, were wishing to try like how they would do:—and I says to them, Mem, says I,—just by way of a trial you know, sir,—I think, says I, if you were to get a nice small morning table-cloth—a breakfast table-cloth, says I, or such like,—just to pin on, says I,—it might do very

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well, instead of a train, says I,—just for a little practice you know, sir;—and so, sir, as I said before, Miss Primley stood for his Majesty, and my lady came up to be introduced;—and so, sir, my lady happened to step back a little, and her foot caught—and so you see, sir,—But I am sure"—(continued the officious handmaiden, applying the bottle of salts),—" it's a mercy she was not the least hurt,—not the least hurt indeed, sir,—and you see she is almost quite well already."

This agreeable prognostic was speedily fulfilled, and my worthy sister squeezing my hand, which held one of hers, said, with a faint smile,—" It is true indeed, brother—I am quite well. I will not purchase immunity from your jokes by feigning myself ill;—so you must just have your laugh at two ladies practising for the drawing-room.—Indeed, you may laugh as you will, but a little practice, with these long trains, is quite indispensable."—" For my part," said Miss Primley,—who stood with her snowy appendage floating behind, like the tail of a white peacock,—" I really see no cause for laughing in the matter. People must get into the way of doing things properly, you know, or it would never do at all:—And really, Mr Keeper, I think it would not be amiss, if you were to practise a little yourself, before a looking-glass, with a bag and sword:—for I take it for granted that you have now made up your mind to go to the levee and drawing-room."—" Indeed, brother," said Judith, " it will be the oddest,—and the most particular—and most improper thing in the world, if



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you don't go. And really it is high time, as Miss Primley says, that you were beginning to practise a little. And, now I think of it, I wish you would let me send for *Monsieur Dos-à-Dos*, to give you a few lessons. It might be done quite quietly,—and nobody know any thing about it. He is the most genteel, agreeable man in the world,—and was over at the French Court all last winter."—" Indeed, indeed, sir," chimed in Mrs Kitty, " nothing could be more properer, or more becominger, than what my lady says:—and if your honour would just be agreeable to let me slip on my bonnet, and step over for *Mooshie Dozydo*,—it would not take a minute of time. He's the most genteelest man, sir, and the most agreeablest, as my lady says,—and teaches the young ladies at my Lady Constant's—and he gave Mrs Open-stitch, my lady's maid, a pattern for sowing, which he got from the French Princesses. There's your neighbour Mr Lumpy, sir, over the way, has been practising and taking lessons with *Mooshie Dozydo*, two hours a-day, for this week past: And Mrs Lumpy's maid tells me, he is so much improved, sir, you would not know him:—and *Mooshie Dozydo* said, says he,—" There will be nobody, says he, presented before " the King, says he, that will make a more prettier or a " more genteeler figure than Mr Lumpy, says he:—Be- " fore I came, says he, he was little better, as one may " say, than a *land porpus*, says he:—But now, says he, " he manages his *raper* like a gentleman:"—These were his very words."—" Really, sir, you had much better," said Miss Primley.—" Indeed, brother," added Ju-



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dith——" Stop, stop, ladies!"—interrupted I,—" a truce with your tongues! This is really turning the tables on me with a vengeance:—You began with being afraid of my ridicule; and now you would make me, perforce, ten times more ridiculous than yourselves. What! take a dancing master at my time of day, and begin bowing and shuffling like a baboon? No, no!—no such fooleries, I pray you. If I do pay my loyal duty to his Majesty, it must be in the undisguised plainness of my own character,—not with the airs of a mountebank."—" Well, brother," said Judith, catching at this as a promise, " since you have so kindly agreed to go, we will let you take your own way."

Thus are sober resolutions overcome; and thus is seen the policy of asking more than you expect, in order to get what you truly desire. Had these females not alarmed me with the vision of the *dancing master*, I doubt if they could have prevailed with me to go to court at all. But what could a poor single gentleman do against three such able tactitians. In short, I was vanquished,—and to Court I went:—first to the Levee, to be presented myself;—and afterwards to the Drawing-room, to see the ladies.

With the particulars of these solemnities, it is not my purpose to detain the reader. They are sufficiently recorded in the more vulgar annals of the day. I shall only remark, that in treading the courts and halls of the ancient dwelling of our Kings, when thus advancing to the presence of their descendant:—in contemplating their costly antique ornament, relieved by the comfort of modern accommodation:—in con-

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trasting the former stillness and desertion of the place, with the life, gaiety, and splendour of the passing scene:—the same mixture of feelings and reflections which I have described in my last paper, returned upon my mind with full force.

I cannot, however, let the Drawing-room pass with so slight a notice. As I paced up and down the long gallery, overhung by the grim and frowning aspects of our ancient monarchs; and beheld it filled, from end to end, with my fair countrywomen, in all their blooming looks, sweet smiles, and rich and graceful dresses;—I own I felt a delight and triumph which I cannot express. I have little experience of such scenes;—yet I could not help being struck with the perfect ease and propriety with which every thing went on. And indeed, such is the natural tact and breeding of our people, that I have been assured by others long practised in Courts, that in dress, demeanour, and every thing becoming the occasion, this Drawing-room of Holyrood, might have vied with any at St James's. Yet our Palace had witnessed no such scene for two centuries; and the great majority of those present had never witnessed it at all.

After all, however, the form of presentation to Royalty, though the offspring of Courts, is but an uncourtly ceremony. The dignity of human nature does not appear to most advantage, in a long string of bipeds shuffling at each other's tail;—bolting through a door, one by one, like sheep from a fold;—and then being shoved off by others pressing behind. Besides, as I hinted in a former paper, human beings, of whatever



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dress or degree, when assembled beyond certain numbers, cannot altogether escape the character of a mob.

As for my worthy sister, she acquitted herself to admiration, under the auspices of Sir William Constant, who conducted his lady and her, while I followed with two of his daughters. At least, this I can avouch, that Judith obtained her own entire approbation; and his Majesty stood equally high in her good graces:—for she declared, on her return home, that he had saluted her with the air of an *Oroondates;* and was positively the greatest King, and the politest gentleman, in Europe.

The various other entertainments and carousals which marked this auspicious season,—the balls and banquets,—the processions and reviews;—all these I must pass over. My purpose is to sketch some general features, not to copy the details. Such an event as a Royal visit was of too much importance, among the *memorabilia* of our city, to be altogether unnoticed by one who attempts to catch the living image of the time. But having given one or two striking views, I must leave the minuter parts to be filled up by other historians.

After a storm, saith the proverb, comes a calm. The preternatural crowd and excitement of the last fortnight, has given place to a quiet almost as extreme. Instead of the glare and bustle about the Palace, nothing remains but the silent sentinel pacing his rounds; with, now and then, a vacant rustic, who, too late for the show itself, gazes reverently on the walls which were its scene. And in place of the stir

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of men and equipages, which filled the whole city, you only see, here and there, a solitary passenger stealing across our spacious streets, and the autumn sun beaming on a dazzling length of pavement.

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## XXVI. CONVERSATION WITH A PEASANT.

Rusticus, abnormis sapiens.
HOR.

WHEN I first had thoughts of fixing my residence in this city, my greatest objection was the giving up that custom of exercise, and enjoyment of rural prospects, to which I had been used at home. The consideration of chief importance here is that of health; for the constitution, which has been modelled to a way of life so different from that of a town, is apt to suffer from the change. Next in regard is the mental enjoyment. When one's daily habits have been familiar with the face of nature, in her grandest and fairest aspects;—when the morning has opened on lofty mountains, or fruitful fields;—when the forest has shaded us at noon;—and the evening called us forth to admire the streams and valleys under her mellow light;—we grow somewhat nice, and do not care to waste our vision on continued lines of houses and pavement.

Such considerations, I own, weigh with me so strongly, that had this city been as other cities are, I verily think it never would have possessed me for an inmate.

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Had it resembled, for instance, the metropolis of England, where you may live and move for the period of a *lustrum*, and never know if nature be still clothed in green;—where miles of suburban villages prolong the town without limit; and banish the very name of solitude from the thoughts of man:—had such, I say, been the case here, I never could have brought myself to exchange my air, and earth, and water, for the dingy elements of brick and stone.

But it is far otherwise. The beautiful situation of this town;—its ample streets and squares;—its open spaces;—its peculiar aspects, and commanding points of view;—the varied ground, and rich landscape, which surround it;—the easy and immediate access to the country;—the romantic prospects and solitary rambles on every side;—all these things make a residence in Edinburgh but another name for a residence in the country, to those who know how to profit by its advantages. Accordingly, I am almost as much out of doors here as I was on my own grounds; and find a variety in my walks which scarcely any other place can afford.

I was, a few mornings ago, taking my usual airing before breakfast, among the fields toward the north of the town, when I overtook a little girl, about six years old, carrying in one hand a bowl wrapped in a coarse towel, and in the other a bottle of milk. She was met by a companion of her own age, who asked her the ordinary question, whither she was going. She answered, "With my father's breakfast."—"Where is he working?"—"Down in the Quarry Park."—"Make haste,

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it's after nine."— The little messenger quickened her pace, and as I continued to follow a short way behind, I heard the same warning repeated by several acquaintances who passed her,—" Make haste, it's after nine:" —each, however, delaying her a little longer to give the injunction. Soon after, she entered a field separated from the road by a hedge, where a man was standing beside a pair of horses loosed from the plough. I was curious to hear what reception she would meet with, and walking forward, I kept on the outside of the hedge, opposite to the man, till the child came up. He seemed a well-looking rustic about thirty; and at first asked the girl, with some roughness, what made her stay. I did not hear her answer; but as the poor thing was hot, and out of breath, he soon relented; and taking her burden from her, made her sit down by him, and wiped her forehead. There was something in his manner that pleased me, and I resolved to speak to him; but not choosing to disturb him at his meal, I went round by an adjoining lane, and returning through a corner of the field which was not yet ploughed, I came up and accosted him.

I began with the usual topics of the weather, and the state of the ground for ploughing; and then remarking the pretty looks of the child, asked if she was his own. He replied in the affirmative. " You have lost no time," said I, " if I may judge of your age and her's by your looks."—He said he was himself just thirty-one, and the girl betwixt six and seven:—That he had married at twenty-three, and had two other younger children alive. " And how many,"

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said I, "have you lost?" He answered, "four—all very young."—"And do you not think, my good friend, that their death was mainly occasioned by early hardship,—and the want of sufficient nourishment and comforts in their infancy?"—"It might in part," answered he, "but I had none better to give them."—"I dare say not—but if you had delayed your marriage some time longer, you might have still had all the children that now remain, and have saved yourself the pain of losing so many."—"That may be true," said he, "I might have waited a little, may be."—"And pray," said I, "don't you find you have but a hard task of it to bring them up?"—"Hard enough, indeed. And yet I was but a wild ill-doing chap before I married;—always drinking, and getting into scrapes;—and never a penny to the fore at the year's end.—I used to spend as much in drink as now keeps two of these bairns."—"That is all well," said I, "and do you spend nothing in drink now?"—"Not a drop,—if it be not a *gill* about the new year.—No, no,—it is quite another thing with me now.—I used to be a rambling, reckless dog,—roving about the country,—idling my time, and wasting my master's horses;—did not give a straw for his anger, for I thought I could always get a living some way;—minded neither man nor law;—and was once near getting into the hands of justice:—Now, whenever any of these pranks come across me, I think on the wife and bairns, and keep quiet."—"Still very good:—and so, by steady working, you really earn more now than you used to do formerly."—"Yes, I earn more;—and I make

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it go farther."—"Well, all these changes are for the better; and you are both a worthier man, and a more useful citizen, than you were before. But is it necessary that all young men should live as you did?"—"No, sir, to be sure:—but many of them do."—"Had you, instead of rioting about, laid up a little money, and thought of marrying now, would you not have been more at your ease?"—"Aye, that's true;—it would have been as wise, I believe.—It's a sore fight I have,—but yet I contrive to get through."—"Long may you do so! There is no fear while vigour lasts, and work does not fail, and children are not too many. But, for aught I see, there may yet be a dozen."—"Like enough, indeed," said he, shaking his head, "if we be spared."—"And then, if any of the other evils come, you will wish you had saved up something for a bad day."—"Aye,—you gentlefolks, with heavy purses, that sit in your parlours, and read books, can foresee all this; but what would you have a poor man do? If he thinks of all these rubs and chances, he will never marry at all.—And then to see how things go on in this world. There's some of the like of you, as I hear say, who have hundreds of pounds to give your children, and yet never think of a wife."—My honest friend was not aware what a home thrust this was,—but I kept my own counsel.—"No," said I, "I do not mean to discourage you. I only laid down a good general rule for all stations, that they should reckon on the ordinary risks of marriage, before undertaking them. I hope Providence will continue your health, and then there is no

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fear of you. You are to remember that the first twelve or fourteen years of matrimony are the hardest; for then children come fast, and are young and helpless. After this, they begin to find their hands and labour, and contribute something to the common stock."—"And yet," said he, "the best rules will fail. There was Will Brown, of our place, that did just as you say. He remained single till after thirty, and was a careful hard-working fellow, and had some money saved up. But his wife bred fast,—and his health failed,—and things went back with him,—and now his family are little better than on the parish. Then there was another lad, one Francis Hall, who married younger than I did, without a penny in his pocket. And his wife had but few children,—and he set up a shop,—and is now thriving,—with a good business, and a good house, and rings his own bell. All is as God directs, and we must just trust in him." "You cannot have a better trust," said I; "but he does not exempt us from using our own reason and prudence: and, though all rules have their exceptions, those I have mentioned will hold good in the main. By marrying later in life, there are at least two favourable chances;—the one, of some money being saved;—the other, of fewer children, and better taken care of."

"As you seem a gentleman that know these things," said he,—"and have taken the trouble to speak to me,—I would fain hear what you think of those same *Saving Banks*, and *Benefit Societies*, that they talk so much about nowadays, in case I could scrape together any little matter. Some advise

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me to the one, and some to the other, and I do not know which to believe. Indeed, to my thinking, many speak of them that know little about them."—"They are both," said I, "good things in their way, when properly managed; and bid fair to be of much use to those in your station;—for you may rest assured that though helps may come, now and then, from others, each must depend mainly on himself. In the *Saving Bank* you may lay up a little store, which is always ready at command; but this too often tempts to a rash use of it. But even if you are prudent, and let it lie, age and sickness may force you to draw it out;—and if this condition last long, the store is exhausted, and you are left destitute in the end. In the *Benefit Club* again (which is just an insurance in health against age and sickness), you are, for a small advance in the mean time, secured against those accidents of life, however long they may last. But then, a society of this kind is far more difficult to frame and manage than the members of it are commonly aware of;—for, without supposing imprudence or dishonesty, it often fails from mere miscalculation, and ignorance of the principle on which it should be formed. In particular, such a society is usually begun by young men, in the prime of life and health. Then the contributions are many, and the demands small. But when a large proportion of the members come to be old and sickly, the case is just reversed; and it is found that the receipts will not make good the provisions calculated upon. This would partly happen, even if there were a succession of young members

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sufficient to fill up the vacancies of the old; but the case becomes far worse if new contributors fail;—which is like enough to happen, when they see the fund burdened with old and sickly pensioners. In short, it is a nice and complex affair,—which answers well with a limited and lasting body of educated men, whose calculations are accurately made, and who have a sure supply of new members;—but often misgives among those of your degree, from the causes I have mentioned;—besides failure of the funds, from bad security, bad management, or dishonesty. Add to this, that there is a pretty constant squabbling and litigation about the health of those who seek support;—one side alleging imposition and laziness,—the other grudging and injustice. For these reasons, I, on the whole, prefer the *Saving Bank*,—where you may rely on perfect security and integrity;—and have chiefly to guard against your own imprudence in drawing out the fund. Yet, if you can manage it, I see no objection to your trying both."—"I am obliged to you, Sir," said he, "for your advice. You have made the thing somewhat plainer to me, though I do not yet rightly follow all the outs and ins of it; and I will take a thought of what you have said."—"At least my good friend," said I, "this much is plain:—What you lay up, there is good hope of afterwards enjoying;—what you spend is surely gone."

The hour of intermission was now over, and he began to yoke his horses. I asked where his house was, which he pointed out to me at the end of a little hamlet, about a mile off. I told him that I would

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call some day in my walks, and inquire for him; to which he assented with much satisfaction. The child was now rising to go away, with her bowl and bottle. I gave her a small bounty, to help towards a Sunday frock, for which she made a proper acknowledgment, under her father's instructions. I took the way leading to the town, and the honest countryman resumed his plough.

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## XXVII. PAINS AND PENALTIES OF AUTHORSHIP.

Scribimus indocti doctique.
HOR.

Why did I write? What sin, to me unknown,
Dipp'd me in ink,—my parents' or my own?
POPE.

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"So, Mr Keeper, the dye is cast, and you are fairly enlisted among the worshipful fraternity of authors. Whether you have maturely weighed all the consequences of this step, you will know better hereafter; but, in the mean time, as I am a hackneyed, though repenting sinner, I think it a Christian duty to give you a small warning of what you are to expect in the course of your new vocation. In doing this, I may be of some service to yourself, if you have yet the power of retreat; and, at all events, may raise a beacon, to deter

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other thoughtless adventurers, who may now be meditating the same fatal career.

"You must know, then, sir, that I was born of creditable parents, and might have followed them in the same useful and humble path of industry in which they had trodden, but for the unlucky fancy which took hold of them to breed me a scholar. They were told by their friends that I was a lad of parts, which it would be a pity to keep down for want of book-learning; so they spared nothing on my education;—satisfied, in their own minds, that I was to die a Judge, or a Doctor, at the least. But, as my ill star would have it, I became so enamoured of the charms of literature, purely for its own sake, (somewhat like yourself, Mr Keeper—barring the estate in the country—), that I scorned to turn it to any profitable use. In this frame of mind, I never could be persuaded to demean myself to professional studies; but burned with an inextinguishable ardour to enlighten the world as an author. My father's gains,—though considerable for one in his station,—afforded, when divided among his family, but a small share to each. My brothers and sisters, by the help of their patrimony, got themselves settled in such callings as tended to better their little stock; while I, on the strength of my capital, resolved to commence gentleman and author.

"My first attempts at composition were, as I remember, about the age of fourteen. They were of the poetical sort; and partook of that awfully despairing cast which prevails at those vernal and joyous years. I recollect showing a copy of verses to an old gentle-



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man,—a friend of our family,—the concluding stanza whereof ran thus :—

> But, ah! what power can bring relief?
> What blissful vision soothe my care?
> Whose only joy is endless grief,
> Whose only hope is in despair.

"The whole passage,—but particularly the antitheses in the two last lines,—I considered as the *ne plus ultra* of poetry and pathos. "Dear me!—lack-a-day!" said the good old gentleman,—"what has been the matter?—What a sad taking you are in!—What is the matter?"—"Nothing," said I, "it is only the way of writing in poetry, you know."—"O aye," said he; "I understand you,—yes, yes,—very fine,—very fine indeed.—But really I was afraid something had happened."

"Not much satisfied with my choice of a critic, I resolved to send my poem to a popular magazine in this our intellectual city. I wrote it fairly out, but in a disguised hand, and dropt it, after night-fall, into their box. My feelings, on the occasion, were such as you might suppose to have been those of Cæsar, on passing the Rubicon; or of Mother Eve, when she plucked the fatal apple. During the interval till the next publication, how many anticipations and conjectures passed through my mind:—how many sleepless nights I spent:—how many different notices did I figure from the magazine;—thanking their ingenious unknown correspondent, and soliciting a continuance of his favours.—The magazine at length came out, but contained neither my poem, nor any notice of it. I boiled with indigna-

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tion. I wrote some bitter satirical stanzas against the editor, and inclosed them to him in a contemptuous letter. I began to think that I had gone too far. I expected a thundering reply in the next publication, and was afraid they might discover and expose me. The magazine came;—and, like the former, exhibited an universal blank with regard to me and my labours.

"I pass over, however, these small scintillations of my nonage, and come to the period of my breaking forth in the full blaze of publication.

"Many were the doubts, anxieties, and forebodings, —the hot and cold fits,—the visions of success and failure,—through which I passed, in the course of preparing my first essay for the world. It was a didactic poem on the Principles of Moral Science, in twelve cantos, illustrated with copious notes and dissertations, and references to the opinions of authors ancient and modern. It had cost me incredible time and labour in composing, collecting, and arranging; in abridging, extending, new-casting, extracting, redacting, comparing, revising, tuning and polishing; and I humbly thought, that some of the views I had opened were so original, that no small change was to be looked for in public opinion, on matters of the highest moment; —with a consequent improvement on the constitution of society. I could not but feel embarrassed in the prospect of the general notice likely to be excited by such a work; and was at a loss to settle with myself how I should behave on the occasion. It was published anonymously, but I had little doubt that my *Incognito* would soon be penetrated. To avoid the first



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bustle of inquiry and applause, I went to the country for a week; which time I chiefly employed in figuring to myself the different impressions my poem would make on different readers; and in anticipating the reception I was to meet with from each, according to his temper or studies. I was a long while of settling, in my own mind, whether I should be likened to Lucretius, Boileau, or Pope;—but I ended by acknowledging, that there was a reach and compass in my work somewhat beyond all the three.

"On my return to Edinburgh, I was at first a good deal surprised to hear of nothing unusual having happened:—that none of my friends had been calling for me in my absence:—and that there were no messages from the bookseller about revising a second edition. I sat hesitating next day, a long time, whether I should venture abroad, or wait the approach of my reputation within doors. I dandled the book in my hand like a favourite child;—turned over the pages;—consulted the learned references;—and recited aloud the shining passages. At length curiosity prevailed, and forth I sallied.

"The first person I met was an ordinary acquaintance. We talked of the common topics of the day, and then parted. I thought it odd that he took no notice of my poem; but ascribed it to that sort of delicacy which prevents a man from praising another to his face: at the same time, I thought I could see in his look a certain conscious deference, with which we regard any person distinguished or remarkable



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above the common. I soon afterwards fell in with another friend, who had more of a turn for letters; and from whom I doubted not of hearing inquiries about my work. But he had just been to see some Indian Jugglers, and was so full of their curious feats, and so twisted and gesticulated to explain them, that he brought a crowd about us, and I was glad to get rid of him. From this I went to call on several families of my acquaintance;—but still no success. Every body was taken up with the most ordinary trifles of public news,—or private scandal,—or family affairs,—or paltry projects of business or pleasure;—so that no time or attention seemed to be left for matters of serious concernment.

"Provoked beyond measure at the indifference or stupidity of the world, I resolved, in a fit of desperation, to rush at once into the lion's mouth, and learn my fate in the shop of my publisher. I found it full of people of all sorts,—purchasers and loungers,—authors and critics,—players, parsons, and fiddlers. At the sight of such an assembly I was frozen to an icicle;—wished myself a thousand miles off;—hoped I was unknown;—and, but for mere shame, would have absolutely slunk away. I covered my confusion, the best way I could, by taking up a newspaper; and as I was looking over the advertisements of publications, which exhibited my own Poem in characters of attractive form and magnitude, a gentleman addressed me;—"Nothing new, Sir, I think, of any consequence, in the literary way, this last week."—"Nothing, Sir,—that I know of,—in particular;"—replied

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I, in a croaking guttural sound,—which was wrung from the very bottom of my entrails.—Soon after, stealing a glance to one side, I discovered a copy of my poem on the counter, in all the freshness of cloth boards, and uncut leaves. A gentleman took it up: but after carelessly glancing over some of the pages, he threw it down again, with a half yawn, and a grunt of no flattering intonation. In short, not one word did I hear about my work, good or bad. I was sure that the bookseller had failed in giving due notice of it. At length I took him into the back-shop, and asked him abruptly if there had been any sale?—"Why, my good Sir," said he, "not what you can call much sale:—I cannot say there has been yet any considerable sale:—But all things in their time, you know:—The merits of a work like your's, Sir, are not known at once:—and then the public are so indolent, and so indifferent, and so taken up with trash:—There now, had you written a paltry novel or ballad, you would have had plenty of sale, I warrant you:—But your poem is a work of labour, Sir,—a laborious work,—a great work:—Takes time to be understood.—Nothing wanting, Sir, I am sure, on my part:—advertised regularly:—Advised my London correspondent:—Sent off bales by the smack *Seaflower* last Tuesday, per invoice.—Must have reached the river long before this time:—No doubt whatever, Sir, of succeeding in the end:—By the way, there is a small account for printing and paper, which you recollect, Sir, you undertook in the first instance:—A



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mere trifle, Sir;—but when you find it convenient:—Our bills all coming due about this time, Sir:—There can't be a question Sir, of the thing taking at last:—and depend upon it, Sir, every exertion on my part.—But——Stay,"—(continued he, looking through the glass-door)—"whose carriage is that stopping?—My *Lady Gobblewit*, the great reader,—one of my best customers:—Excuse me for a moment, Sir"——

"In vain were all the devices of the bibliopolic art put in practice, to help forward my unfortunate poem.—In vain were advertisements repeated,—and copies sent *From the Author* to persons of note,—and all the family of *Puffs* called in aid,—direct, oblique, collusive and collateral. In vain was notice given of a second edition before the first had been well broken upon;—and, to forward the deceit, a new title-page prefixed to the ancient volume.—In vain did I get it alternately praised and blackened in the reviews.—All would not do. My luckless offspring dropped still-born from the press, and by no efforts could be coaxed or dandled into vitality.

"I should be ashamed to confess all the anguish and mortification which this failure occasioned to me. I successively cursed myself, my folly, and my hard fate;—the blindness of the public, and the unmerited success of my rivals. Twenty times did I forswear the Muse, and all her works; and resolved never again to wield a pen. But those paroxysms abated; and, like Captain Gulliver, after every new shipwreck and disaster, I had no sooner lived a while at ease, than the old instinct revived, and urged me for-

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ward to tempt fresh dangers. My subsequent adventures on this stormy sea of authorship, will, if you choose to accept of them, form the subject of another letter. Mean time, I remain, your companion in calamity,

"SCRIBONIUS."

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## XXVIII. PAINS AND PENALTIES OF AUTHORSHIP.

Quicquid erit vitæ scribam color.
HOR.

Then mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.
JOHNSON.

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—Your reception of my former letter induces me to resume my history of the adventures of an Author, the introductory chapter of which I have already given. The success of my first literary attempt, which I there detailed, was by no means encouraging; but the disappointment had at least this good effect, that it made me pause, for some time, before I ventured to appear again as a candidate for public favour. In the course of this deliberation, I discovered that I had been somewhat premature in my first essay; and that it would be as well for me to think and learn a little more myself, before undertaking to teach others. I therefore allowed several years to pass over, before again committing my thoughts

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to the press; and I reaped, in the end, the fruits of this prudent delay, by getting into better favour with the public.

"It is not my intention to trouble you with a detailed history of my literary undertakings, and their fate. Some of them were unfortunate enough; and in the course of my probation, I went through many of the well known sufferings of an unsuccessful author. My efforts, however, were at length more prosperous; several of my pieces were well received; and by degrees my name rose into some celebrity. In the anguish of my former failures, I thought that I had then endured the greatest, and indeed the only evil that could befal an author; and looked upon success in literature as a condition of unmixed felicity. I have since had some experience of that envied state; and have seen cause to introduce a few shades into my imaginary picture.

"I had scarcely grown into reputation as an author, when, one morning, as I was finishing breakfast, a short, square, vulgar-looking man, entered the room; who, after much bowing and shuffling, pulled, from an inside pocket under his arm, a pair of dirty boards, enclosing some papers still dirtier. These he presented to me, with an intimation, that it was a proposal for publishing by subscription, the poems of his friend Mr Threadbare,—who was a lodger in his house,—and who, at present, found it convenient to remain at home. There were many respectable testimonies from Justices of the Peace, schoolmasters, and others, to Mr Threadbare's moral character; as well

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as to his skill in writing poetry, worming dogs, and dressing trout-flies;—in any of which arts he was willing to be employed on reasonable terms. My visitor added, that many distinguished names had honoured the present subscription; and that my signal success in the walks of literature emboldened him to hope that all reputable attempts in the same way would receive my favour and support. This train of reasoning did not wholly satisfy me, as I had hitherto got more fame than profit by my works; but from some motive which I cannot undertake to explain, (awkwardness, I fear, rather than charity, or a love of letters), I put down my name, and gave my half-guinea. This would have been of little moment, had it been confined to a single case. But similar applications came so fast, that I was obliged to be more resolute in my resistance for the future.

"Another injury to my purse arose from the cool expectation of every body I knew, that I would send them, on a successful publication, *a copy from the author*. But I was at last obliged to adopt the doctrine and practice of Addison, when he went as Secretary to Ireland. "I have a hundred friends," said he, "who have business at my office,—for which a fee of two guineas is due by each. If I excuse them, each only gains *Two*, while I lose *Two Hundred*. There is no parity in this,—so I will e'en let them pay." The example was good, and I resolved to follow it.

"But an evil more difficult to evade soon arrived, in the manifold applications made to me for my opinion of the works of others,—my assistance in correction,

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—and advice about the proper time and mode of publishing. All sorts of people seemed to think themselves entitled to intrude on my time and comfort with their concerns. Persons whom I never heard of were recommended by persons whom I never saw. Works of all kinds and dimensions;—poetry and prose,—quartos and pamphlets,—systems of metaphysics, school exercises, and favourite songs;—all came, with humble requests to look over,—hint improvements,—expunge blemishes,—use all freedoms,—as every thing was trusted to my known judgment and candour. I was expected to be equally ready for a treatise on Anatomy, or a new theory of Thorough Bass:—nay, many seemed to expect, that my labour was to supply their own negligence. One gentleman sent me a poem to prepare for the press, which he had written on his journey to town in his post-chaise:—Another would have me compare his translation with the original Greek, as he was doubtful of several passages:—And a third begged I would glance over the calculations in his *Tables of Interest*, to see that all was right.

"As to those who sent me their works by way of compliment, I suffered many a struggle between conscience and politeness in making the proper return. At length I fell upon a plan which relieved me greatly. On pretence of eagerness to acknowledge the favour, I sent my answer before reading the work. This practice,—with the occasional use of a few well-sounding phrases (such as *important subject—new views—neat composition—promising introduction*—and

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so on), enabled me to get through this part of my trials pretty successfully.

"Another of my distresses arose from a peculiarity of temper, not without example among my predecessors in authorship:—This was a strong ambition of literary fame, joined to a shyness under personal notice or display. When I had become an author of some reputation, I found my renown a considerable burden to me. I am naturally of a social turn, when at ease among persons with whom I am intimate, and whose rank or acquirements I am not afraid of. While I was unknown, I used to mingle often in such society, and unbend myself with a hilarity which I still remember with regret. As I became more distinguished, I perceived that my old companions began to keep aloof from me. They regarded me with a sort of distrust and awe, not unmingled with a grain of envy. Several of them had made to themselves, and each other, foolish applications of what I had written,—wholly unthought of by me,—at which they had taken offence. When we met in company, they were silent and reserved; and this brought an equal constraint on me. In short, our freedom and intimacy were gone.

"Even among those of higher station, with whom I formed acquaintance, I could seldom get upon that footing of equality and ease which is necessary to agreeable society. When invited to their houses, I found a general silence and suspense. I had been asked as a *show* or a *lion;* and was expected to talk, while the company should listen and admire. Every

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time I opened my lips, there was a hush of attention. It seemed to be settled, that nothing less than trope or metaphor could come from me, any more than the renowned Hudibras ;—or, like Moliere himself, that I could not *demander à boire sans un pointe.* Literary subjects were started, and plots laid to draw me out. All this appeared, in my eyes, with such an air of ridicule and awkwardness, that I could scarcely utter a word. What little I did say, was said with constraint and embarrassment: And to an indifferent spectator, I might generally have passed for the dullest fellow in the room.

"The neglect of the wise is a sufficient penance to the candidate for fame, but his mortification is not complete till he attract the praise of fools. In the course of my career, I published a little poem, which I had laboured *con amore*, and which really deserved some favour. It was received, however, with universal neglect, except by the grave Dr Doublechin, who took it under his special patronage, and put forth a heavy pamphlet in its defence. This was worse to bear than the indifference of others. I wished the doctor and his pamphlet in the limbo of lost follies, and gave vent to the pride and bitterness of my heart in the following little fable:

"THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ASS.

"The Nightingale sang her sweet song by a meadow side where beasts were feeding. The Ass came and listened, and when she had done, he began to praise her music. 'Out on thee, fool!'—cried the bird,—'If I can please none but thee, I were best be silent.'

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"In the course of my probation as an author, I did not escape what far greater men have suffered from,—the competition of unworthy rivals. But when I reflected that, in former ages, the judgment of contemporaries had been so dull or malicious, as to bring Mævius into a comparison with Virgil, Pradon with Racine, Settle with Dryden, and Philips with Pope; I consoled myself for the success of those who sometimes disputed reputation with me.

"But my fate would have been incomplete without the visitation of a *patron*. This evil appeared in the person of Sir Simon Wouldbe, a veteran pretender to the protection of letters and authors. He had published several works in his own name, in the composition whereof the world gave him credit for more help than he cared to boast of. And although he always affected a great patronage of authors, few substantial marks of it ever remained with them. I was exhorted by my friends to encourage this connexion; and when he asked me to live in his house, was over-persuaded to consent. Here I spent several years, under the twofold penance of correcting his works, and submitting my own to his correction. The first was indeed a lubbard labour;—but nothing to the torture of the second. What did I suffer from his objections and amendments:—his misconceptions of the design;—his dislocation of the argument;—his solecisms of language;—his untuning of periods;—his mixing of figures;—his quenching of happy thoughts in absolute baldness and inanity. I was, however, tempted to continue with him by frequent

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hints which he dropped of providing for me in his will. At length my aged patron died; and on his Settlements being opened, it was found that he had left me the copy-right of all his unpublished works. This legacy was much about the same value as that which Gil Blas received from his master, the Licentiate Sedillo; and I treated for it by the lump with the pastry-cook.

"The last and greatest evil incident to a successful author, is the purgatory of criticism. This appears sometimes under the form of polite mockery, by which you are anatomised before the public, with the genteelest air imaginable:—Sometimes in that of political prejudice, which deals out praise or blame, as you are supposed to favour one or other party in the state:—Sometimes in mawkish praise, which ridicules worse than censure:—But chiefly in downright abuse, which assails you in morals, learning, person, and private history, merely for having presumed to give your thoughts to the world. As to myself, I remember having once put forth a very inoffensive Essay on Classical Learning, which scarcely appeared, till I was attacked with as much fury as if I had exhorted my fellow citizens to eat each other alive. It seems to be the notion of this class of critics, that authors live in a state of instinctive and perpetual warfare; and, whenever a new one is started among them, that it is the business of all the rest to run down and worry him. Whether this practice tend to the advancement of good manners, or good letters, I leave you to judge. But, in the mean time, I give you fair warning what

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you are to expect; and recommend to you, either to retreat betimes, or prepare yourself to be throttled with a good grace. Wishing you a happy deliverance, I remain your experienced friend,

'SCRIBONIUS."

The evil alluded to in the conclusion of my correspondent's letter, is of old standing; and one from which the genius of a Tasso, a Corneille, a Dryden, or a Pope, could not exempt them. Its inveteracy has, however, abated of late years in this country. This, I think, is an advantage; as the practice tends to discourage good authors rather than bad. For my own part, if any objections shall be made to my lucubrations, in the spirit of fairness and candour, I shall listen to them with respect; but verily I must eschew all literary squabbling. My thoughts and fancies are not of so mettlesome a temper as to be always ready for combat. To use the words of a great genius, as applied to his own speculations;—"They are not armed at all points for battle; but dressed to visit those who are willing to give a peaceful entrance to truth." *

* Burke's Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful.

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## XXIX. INSECT PHILOSOPHY.

Admiranda tibi levium spectacula rerum,
Magnanimosque duces, totiusque ordine gentis,
Mores, et studia, et populos, et prælia dicam.
VIRG.

While insects from the threshold preach.
GREEN.

"INDEED, my good Sir, you will make nothing of it. It is quite in vain to expect any thing new in our days. The proverb is always recurring, *Nil dictum quod non dictum prius.* Every avenue is preoccupied. If you write without reading, you stumble on the thoughts of others. If you read, you find yourself every where forestalled. In short, the trade is overstocked. There is yourself now:—a person, without flattery, of no ordinary attainments. Yet do not I trace, in every second thought, or turn of phrase, the model from which you copy. No, no,—depend upon it,—nothing original is to be looked for in these latter times."

With such encouraging prognostics was I greeted, the other morning, by my friend Mr Acid, who came in upon me as I was rummaging among the drawers of my *Cabinet*, and turning over books, papers, and notandums, in the view of gathering some entertainment for my readers. His words struck the more deeply on my conscience, as I had just fallen upon a little anonymous piece, in the French language, from which I hoped to extract some hints for an essay.

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And as rebuke often makes people desperate, where they have not the means of amendment, so I boldly justified the practice of a little discreet borrowing, now and then, as helping out the general fund of credit:—and, after my visitor had taken leave, set myself, by a few additions and subtractions, to adapt my loan to present use. I now offer the result to my readers; and shall be satisfied with the compliment which Dryden tells us was paid to him by Charles II; "That he would be glad if the other writers of his day would steal as good things for him as Mr Dryden."

Cicero, in his Tusculan Questions, tells us of a certain river called the *Hypanis* in Sarmatia, whose banks are frequented by a small winged Insect that lives but a few hours. Those which come into the world at sunrise die early in the evening; while those which are hatched at noon, live till nightfall. They differ, however, from other ephemeral creatures in this, that the living generation does not wholly perish with the day; for those which receive life a little before sunset, sleep through the night, and make out the rest of their course next morning.

While meditating on this transitory being, it came into my thoughts to fancy one of those *Hypanians*, who by dint of great strength of constitution, and other favourable circumstances, had outlived his contemporaries, and prolonged his earthly career from morning even until the approach of night. During such a term of life, it will easily be imagined what a store of wisdom and experience he would ga-

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ther ;—what wonders he would witness ;—what scenes of acting and suffering he would pass through. The swarm of young insects, whose life hath not exceeded an hour or two, approach this venerable patriarch with awe, and listen to his instructions. His recollection of the past seems like a prodigy to their inexperienced minds.

At length, towards the close of day, he finds the hour of his departure drawing nigh. He calls around him his family and friends, to bid them a last adieu, and bestow his dying advice and benediction. The fame of his wisdom attracts a multitude from all quarters. They assemble under the shade of a spreading mushroom, and the expiring sage thus addresses them :—

" My friends and countrymen, I now perceive that the longest life hath its term. The close of mine is fast approaching, and methinks I cannot employ its short remainder better than in leaving the fruits of my experience as a legacy to you. For mine own particular, I cannot regret the prospect of an event which relieves me from the burden of a weary life, and the sufferings of old age. For alas! what is life but a repetition of paltry pursuits and bitter cares? In my long experience of this world, I have mingled much in affairs, public and private. I have seen mighty changes and revolutions,—grievous disasters, —and transient prosperity. I have suffered also my domestic trials ;—I have had my hopes and fears,—my losses and gains :—and now I find that all is vanity, and that the true philosophic happiness is derived



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from our own minds. Yet the remembrance of the woes I have seen and suffered, fills my aged eyes with tears; and holds up a warning to young minds to abate their confidence in worldly success. One unhappy generation of my countrymen nearly perished in a sudden shower. At another time, a swarm of gay imprudent youth were swept away by a gust of wind. A dreadful volcano (called by men a lime-kiln) burst forth in our neighbourhood, and stifled many families in a moment. Then came monstrous fowls, with blue wings and forked tails, whose size covered half the heavens, and blotted out the sun;—and devoured us by myriads in their remorseless maws. Furthermore, I well remember when the passage of a black cloud embittered our existence with fear for a long tract of time.

"In those early periods, there were bloody wars between our nation and that powerful people who inhabit beyond the molehills. They are, you know, our natural enemies;—a people distinguished for perfidy and rapacity over the whole earth. I led forth our armies to combat:—we gained victories:—we suffered defeats:—torrents of blood were poured forth:—our glory was published through the universe. I singled out their chief, of mighty prowess, and renowned for feats of arms; whose stature exceeded my own by a whole hair-breadth. The conflict was terrible: but in the end I triumphed; and the world rung with my fame.

"Peace was at length restored, and I was sent to negotiate with the enemy. The toils of the field were



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succeeded by those of the cabinet. What plots and counter-plots!—What fraud, over-reaching, and cajoling!—But my labours were crowned with success. I gained for our nation a spacious territory, stretching along the bog, from that willow tree, all the way to yonder ditch. My services were acknowledged by my country, but never fitly rewarded.

"When at rest from foreign war, we were torn by domestic schisms and factions, civil and religious. We had the *Red-wings* and the *Black-wings*, the *Long-legs* and the *Short-legs*, the *Tails* and the *No-tails*. These things appear to me now as vanity, and I exhort you to peace and union. Yet truth obliges me to own that I never knew a *Short-leg* who was altogether to be depended on.

"Being sensible of the importance of perpetuating distinguished families in a state, I have entailed my vast possessions unto the twentieth generation. Yet after all, what are the ambitions and vanities of this transitory scene.

"Alas! my friends, when I look back on the pride and ardour of my youth, all appears like a dream. What hopes did I then form:—what schemes engage in:—what wonders achieve. I constructed the most magnificent cells:—I bathed in the purest waters:—I sucked the most delicate flowers:—I pruned my wings with the nicest care:—I gathered store of riches:—I boasted of my strength and stature:—and thought myself secure from mortal decay. I chased the phantoms of ambition;—flattered my friends;—circumvented my enemies:—but now all is at an end. I tasted, too, the bewitching draught of love:—I was

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torn with jealousy:—I was forsaken and undone. In the excess of my despair, I looked forward with loathing to the tedious length of life awaiting me:—I prepared my own destruction. But prudence and fortitude came to my aid:—I resolved to fulfil my destiny:—and now it is about to be ended by nature.

"So long hath been my pilgrimage, that I can remember to have lived with an earlier generation, and witnessed appearances of nature which are now no more. However incredible it may seem to you, I recollect a time when the great luminary which now almost touches the earth at yonder point, was fixed directly over our heads, and shot down his rays with a fervour which few of this degenerate age could support. Nay, what is more wonderful, my memory carries me back to a still remoter period, when he stood as near to the earth as he does now, in the opposite quarter of the heavens. Let not your slender knowledge doubt of these truths, how far soever beyond your experience; but respect the dictates of age and wisdom. And believe me further, when I tell you, that in those primitive times the productions of nature reached a degree of perfection of which you can now form but a faint idea. For it was then my happiness to converse with a race of flies of a goodlier presence, and more majestic form, than can be seen in these degenerate times. Nor were they more gifted in bodily endowments, than in wisdom, courage, eloquence, and other accomplishments of great and noble minds. But the powers of nature were then equally vigorous in all her works. The atmosphere was



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purer;—the seasons more genial;—the fruits and flowers of far richer hue and flavour, than any that are known at present. For I cannot but observe that a decay of nature hath lately been creeping on, as if in sympathy with my decline. The symptoms of failure and decrepitude are fast approaching; and I foresee in the coming age a grievous deterioration of all things. But (to use the words of one eminent among the sons of men) 'I have lived long enough for nature and for glory.' I leave my example for the benefit of you my children. To imitate at least will become you, however little you can hope to equal; born as you are in the old age of the world, and destined to a period of darkness, degeneracy, and decline."

This address was received with becoming edification by the attentive crowd: and perceiving by the harangue having closed, that the breath was now out of the venerable sage, they made preparations for the funeral obsequies with all due solemnity and decorum. He lay in state, as beseemed a person of his rank and figure, for the space of three minutes and a quarter; and was then committed, with proper ceremony, to the tomb of his ancestors.

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Reader! dost thou smile? *Mutato nomine, de te Fabula narratur.* A little wider space;—a little longer time;—and where is the difference? To Beings of a nature superior to ours, the cares and contentions,—the acquisitions and triumphs—of Man, will appear in much the same light, as to us do those of the Sarmatian Insect.

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## XXX. MORAL EPIDEMICS.

Morborum quoque te causas et signa docebo.

VIRG.

IN beginning my labours, I gave notice of a continued practice in the department of Moral Medicine. Various patients have accordingly applied for my advice, on whom my prescriptions have produced the best effects. These consultations may perhaps be hereafter given to the public, for the satisfaction of the curious, and to my own great profit and reputation;—but, in the mean time, nothing more is necessary, I apprehend, to show my success, than the manifest improvement which has already shown itself in the morals and manners of the age. For where (it is asked by my favourers) are now to be seen those flaws and imperfections in society which were formerly so apparent? Who will pretend that Vanity now walks our streets, or Detraction sips at our tea-tables?—that parents continue to be foolish,—or children undutiful,—or spouses at variance,—or masters capricious,—or servants dishonest? Have Ministers any thing now in view but the public good;—or do their opponents ever dream of an exchange of places? Who ever hears at present of selfishness in public men,—or pride in the nobility,—or faction among the people? Are such things known as a harsh creditor, or a fraudulent debtor? as a trader in religion, or a quack in politics,

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or a pretender in philosophy? Do young fellows nowadays, ever marry for convenience,—or misses run away with their dancing-masters?—Now, of all this improvement, it is pertinently asked, what cause can be assigned but the efficacy of these my prescriptions?

Although the force of truth obliges me (notwithstanding a large share of natural modesty) to subscribe to the above observations in general; I can hardly flatter myself that the cure, so happily begun on society, is yet absolutely perfect. I shall therefore still continue my advices and prescriptions. But before proceeding to the reports of individual cases, I think it proper, by way of introduction, to take a glance at certain *Moral Epidemics*, or *periodical contagions*, which prevail, from time to time, in this our variable climate; and whose effects are truly alarming, both in extent and rapidity. As the accurate knowledge, description, and classification of these will doubtless tend to their gradual abatement, and final cure, I shall proceed to note down a few of the chief which have lately fallen under my observation; with the nomenclature, leading symptoms, and most approved methods of treatment.

The first of these epidemics may be termed the THAUMALOGIA, or morbid tendency towards AMPLIFICATION IN DISCOURSE. It is chiefly prevalent among young gentlemen, in describing their feats of horsemanship, fox-hunting, steeple-chasing, drinking, boxing, coach-driving, and other polite exercises. The distinguishing symptoms are great animation of countenance,—violence of gesture,—and fluency of talk,—

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interspersed with oaths, and words of an *ampullar* or *sesquipedalian* formation. These appearances are generally accompanied with a certain lowness or attenuation of intellect;—which last circumstance is thought to be the great obstacle in the way of cure; as the system will rarely sustain active remedies, and only admits of palliatives and alteratives.

Nearly allied to this,—and commonly joined with it,—is the MENDACIUM ALBUM, or WHITE LIE: —indicated by an involuntary departure from fact, in all statements or narratives,—particularly those which regard the patient himself. Some of the fair-sex have shown a predisposition to this malady, in alluding to their own conquests, or the slights offered to their rivals. I have also known the most healthy country gentlemen seized with it, when describing the profits of their farming,—the fecundity of their breed of pigs, —or the success of their field sports.

Another prevailing distemper is the AMNEMONIA, or INTERMITTENT OBLIVION; which occasions a sudden and unaccountable lapse of memory, as to particular persons or events, while no other disturbance of the mental faculties is perceivable. It is peculiarly inveterate on the approach of an unfashionable acquaintance; and will induce a total incapacity of recognition, though the parties have known each other from their cradle. Like other intermittents, it sometimes exhibits a revival of memory as sudden; which is observed to take place on any accession of fortune or fashion to the party forgotten.

There is an affection directly the converse or oppo-

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site of the above, which betrays itself in a preternatural acuteness of the organ of recollection;—leading the patient to remember events which never happened,—and to describe the most familiar intercourse with persons whom he never saw. In the access of this delirium, he will not scruple to accost, as old friends, individuals whom he scarcely ever spoke to in his life,—particularly if they possess a certain rank and figure in the world. The dregs of this distemper are apt to degenerate into a chronic habit of COHESION or DANGLING;—and in this, its last and most virulent stage, there are small hopes of cure.

Next to the above, in point of extent and malignity, may be reckoned the MICROLOGOMANIA; or depraved appetite for all sorts of gossip, small talk, anecdotes, memoirs, letters, sayings, and doings, of all manner of persons, great or insignificant. This disease hath arisen to such a height among writers, readers, and venders,—and is spreading with such rapidity,—as seems to call aloud for the interference of the law. Now as this can only have effect in one of two ways,—either by abridging, on the one hand, the sacred liberty of the press,—or, on the other, by curtailing the funds of the purchasers,—our Legislature hath, with a true constitutional delicacy, chosen the latter.

There is a contagion pretty general, and of long standing, called EMPEIRIKOLOUTHIA, or admiration of, and following after, quacks and impostors;—with a chronic appetite or longing for dupery and deception in the abstract. This disorder is especially seen in a morbid appetency towards all mountebanks in Re-

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ligion, Politics, Education, Medicine, Metaphysics, Music, and such like ;—and is always observed to be the stronger, in proportion as the misleader is more voluble, impudent, and unintelligible. The symptoms are a gaping of the mouth, staring of the eyes, and frequent interjections of laudation and astonishment.

I must, however, add, that an ingenious friend of mine denies that there is any thing morbid in the disposition here spoken of. For he will have it, that the appetite for deception is one of the original necessities of our nature ;—similar to that of food or sleep ; —and as conducive to the comfort and well-being of the individual. In testimony whereof, he quotes the *dictum* of a great philosopher,—

> Doubtless the pleasure is as great
> Of being cheated, as to cheat.

Nearly allied to this, or rather a variety of it, is the AUTO-PARACROUSIS, or SELF-DELUSION ; under the influence whereof grave dull men value themselves on their wit ;—legislators boast of their skill in dancing ;—town misses, by dint of reading novels, fancy they have a taste for groves and streams ;—and philosophers set up for critics in dress and fashion. By way of remedy for such cases, I have invented a curious Magical Mirror, wherein the patient may see himself in his true colours, proportions, and position,—from which I hope for the best results.

Symptoms appeared, during last winter, of the BREPHOMANIA or FEVER OF REJUVENESCENCE, which took possession of many persons of both sexes,

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well on towards their grand climacteric. The diagnostics were a gay janty air,—levity of talk,—thin clothing,—appearance at all public assemblies ;—together with a certain grimace of behaviour, indicated by simpering, nodding, languishing, shrugging, wriggling, singing, sighing ;—with other strange impertinencies of a like sort. Several of the male sex were so far affected, as to expose themselves in public, by riding the great horse,—driving coaches,—squiring ladies to shops,—dancing at balls,—making a noise in the box-lobby,—with sundry similar outrages,—to the great affliction of their friends.—None of the female cases were traced to a greater height, than a display of nudity at the neck ;—floating through a *quadrille* or *waltze* ;— ogling, lisping, giggling, and such extravagancies.

The mode of treatment recommended, is the conveying the patients to a comfortable apartment, with books, and moderate diet ; and wrapping them up in warm plain clothing, suitable to their years and infirmities.

A species of Counter-Malady, called ANDRYPOCRISIS, or AFFECTATION OF MANHOOD, was observed to seize some of the younger branches of the male sex ; which appeared in a strutting air, fierce look, and warlike voice; with a pertinacious scrubbing of the chin and upper lip, to coax out a beard. Several of these poor things had evidently made a premature escape from the nursery ; whither they were remanded, with a proper allowance of pap and pudding.

Another very lamentable seizure attacked many, in

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a stiffening of the dorsal *vertebræ*, and sinews of the neck; with a tension of the *musculi erectores* of the head; which led to a heightening of the person,—turning up of the nose,—cocking of the chin,—elevation of the eyebrow,—and depression of the corners of the mouth. The accompanying symptoms, were a prominence of the belly,—slow and stately walk,—with one arm folded behind the back. It was remarked that the persons chiefly liable to this affection were new-made peers, city knights, heads of colleges, mayors, church-wardens, and overseers of the poor.

The last of the prevailing epidemics which I shall at present touch upon,—and perhaps the most alarming,—is the revival, and extreme virulence, of a disorder of old standing, namely, the GRAPHOMANIA, or CACOETHES SCRIBENDI;—being that uncontrollable desire of instructing and delighting their fellow-countrymen which hath taken possession of nine-tenths of the adult population of this island. Its most malignant form is the poetical;—indicated by that great flow of lines, measured and unmeasured, purporting to be poetry,—which issues in solid poems, incidental thoughts, irregular verses, stanzas, or effusions,—Epic, Lyric, Dramatic, Pastoral, Amatory, or Occasional. This fearful contagion is as old as the days of Horace, and is so deeply rooted in human nature as to admit only of palliatives, and scarcely to give hope of a radical cure. Even the approved resource of locking up from ink, paper, and charcoal, is found ineffectual any longer than while the restraint continues; for no sooner has the patient emerged into open day, than the disease breaks

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out again, as violent as ever. I shall not fail to turn my thoughts, from time to time, towards the abatement of this crying calamity.

Meantime, I close this my report, which I submit to the consideration of the curious, purposing to resume the subject at a future opportunity.

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## XXXI. NEW MARRIAGE COURT.

Connubio jungam stabili, propriamque dicabo.
VIRG.

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"I HAVE observed, Mr Keeper, that you are a dreamer of dreams, and that those exercises of your sleep commonly take such a turn as to convey instruction to your waking readers. Whether that habit be infectious I do not know; but certain it is, that I was seized, the other night, with a fit resembling yours. What infusion it may have of the profitable, it does not become me to say. The subject of my dream was similar to your own—that of Marriage;—and the variety of that subject from which it took its peculiar complexion, was suggested by your allusion to a saying of Dr Johnson's, "That marriages would be as happy, on the average, if settled by the Lord Chancellor, as they are, in the present fashion, when left to the choice of the parties themselves." As it has not yet been my good fortune, any more than your own, to enter into the holy state, my mind

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is of course engaged in frequent surmises and speculations, as to the chances, favourable or unfavourable, on taking such a step. I was revolving these matters a few nights past, on going to sleep, when the above apothegm of Dr Johnson remaining uppermost in my thoughts, grew into the following whimsical vision :—

" Methought I stood in a certain spacious hall in the City of Westminster, at one end of which there was an elevated bench, whereon a grave-looking person sat, in the habit of a judge. The ornaments around, instead of the usual emblems of Justice with her scales, consisted of the figure of Hymen and his torch ;—with various attendants, such as Prudence, Plenty, Constancy, and Love ;—though this little deity was kept somewhat in the back ground by his neighbours. I was told, by one of the bystanders near me, that this was the *Marriage Court*, lately established by Act of Parliament (notwithstanding strong opposition on the part of the *Clergy* and *Accoucheurs*) ;—and that the present was one of the days of giving judgment. As my informer seemed to be familiar with the place, I asked how this new branch of our judicial system was going on, and whether it gave satisfaction. ' O, to a wonder,'—replied he,—' nothing ever answered so well. You shall see, in a minute, how cleverly his lordship gets through matters. The cases are just going to be called on.'

" The first case on the paper was that of the *Lord Hardacres* and the *Lady Scrip*, both past the heyday of youth,—his Lordship having already buried

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two wives, and the Lady one husband. They advanced, with much decorum, towards the judgment-seat; and being called upon for a statement of particulars, it was proved, by credible witnesses, that his Lordship was proprietor of large unencumbered estates, and had only three children, all provided for.—Her Ladyship was the relict of the worshipful Sir Holdfast Scrip, knight and alderman, well known on the Stock Exchange, who had left her, without any family, to the enjoyment of a hundred thousand pounds in the funds,—besides bonds, bills, and assets, to a large amount. It was further made out, to the satisfaction of the court, that neither had, at any time, spent above a tenth part of their income; or had ever been known to do a generous action in the course of their lives. There was indeed a rumour of his Lordship having once given twenty pounds to a poor widow, with seven children, a relation of his own; but he made it appear, by the clearest evidence, that he had thereby bought off a claim of double value. There was here so beautiful a harmony of sentiment between the parties, that the court could not hesitate; and decree for the marriage was forthwith pronounced. As they retired, with a profound obeisance, a demand was made by the clerk for his fees; which being resisted by the parties, such a wrangling arose among them, that the court was obliged to interfere, and command silence. The happy pair went away in a hackney coach,—his Lordship observing, that he had parted with his carriage since the last start in the price of oats.

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"The next couple who approached were the Reverend *Dr Jonathan Gradus*, rector of *Fatlounge*, in the county of Salop, aged fifty-five,—and *Miss Lucinda Warble*, of Grosvenor Square, spinster, aged seventeen. The Doctor stated that he had hitherto lived a bachelor, spending his time chiefly at his parsonage, only varied by an annual visit to his old friends at Oxford. That having had occasion to come to town on business, he had been invited to a party of music (of which he is passionately fond), where he had heard Miss Warble sing and play so divinely, that he was sure she would make him happy for life. The young lady mentioned, on her part, that she had no fortune, but had been always accustomed to live in the best society, where her musical talents were much admired:—That most of her education had been devoted to the acquisition of that and other polite accomplishments:—That the Doctor had appeared to her extremely amiable, and had paid her many compliments on her voice:—That she understood he had a fine fortune, and she doubted not would allow her to spend at least half the year at London, Bath, Brighton, and other genteel places of resort. On this, the Doctor looked a little grave; and muttered something about happy retirement, moderate pleasures, and the expense of a town life. The court, without hearing more, gave judgment against the marriage; and as the parties withdrew, I thought that both looked as if they congratulated themselves on a good escape.

"There now came forward two very young persons of elegant appearance,—the gentleman in a military

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dress. When asked for an explanation of particulars, they broke forth into a rhapsody about flames,—and feelings,—and united souls,—and cold calculating prudence,—and the delights of love and poverty. His Lordship said that he must have something more precise; on which it was set forth, that the parties had known each other for a whole week,—had danced together at several balls,—had both lived much in gay life,—had not a shilling betwixt them, but his cornetcy in a regiment of hussars,—and, to conclude, that their happiness was indissolubly locked up in each other. Notwithstanding all this, the court, on a due consideration of circumstances, refused to allow of the marriage;—whereupon the youth burst into a tempest of oaths, exclamations, and despair,—interspersed with ends of poetry,—and threats of putting a period to his life,—or, as he called it, *Self-immolation*. The lady melted into sighs and tears; and concluded with a fit of hysterics. The judge, however, remained inflexible, and both were obliged to retire. I must own that I anticipated very fatal consequences;—but was much relieved, by seeing each of them come back, with a new partner, before the business of the day was over.

"The next suitor who appeared was a buxom middle-aged woman, who led by the hand a good-looking fellow, somewhat younger than herself. She addressed the court, by saying, that she was the landlady of the *Three Tuns* in Clare Market, where she and her late husband had carried on a good running trade. That the poor man had taken to drink, and died about a year ago, leaving her with two small children.



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That she had been much comforted in her widowhood by the young man whom she now brought, who was waiter in the house: and being sensible that a poor lone woman like her, without a head, was liable to be imposed on, she had resolved, for the good of her family, to take him for a second husband. On some questions being put as to the state of the family,—and the character of the young man,—she broke out in his praise with much volubility and impatience;—declared he was the handiest lad about a house that ever scored a reckoning; and ended by hinting that there were pressing reasons for despatch,—as truly she had made so sure of a favourable judgment, that . . . As this last argument was too apparent to admit of either doubt or delay, judgment was forthwith given for the ceremony. Upon this she made her best courtesy, and hoped to see his lordship, any time he was passing, at the *Three Tuns*.

"The next scene was of a graver cast. A beautiful young creature was brought forward by her parents, who prayed the court to make order for her union with an elderly, square-made, hard-looking man, of a very forbidding aspect. The poor girl was in tears, and had every mark of terror and dejection in her look. Her father stated that the match he had provided for his daughter was every way suitable, the gentleman having made a handsome fortune as a planter and slave-dealer in the West Indies: That the only objection was a few black children, now in this country for their education; but these he engaged to ship off



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by the spring packets, consigned to his correspondent in the plantations. It further appeared that he had had a former wife in Barbadoes, who died rather unaccountably; but he proved that he had given her a handsome funeral, and ordered his slaves a double allowance of rum to drink her memory. When the girl was asked as to her inclinations, her tears redoubled, and she could not help confessing the strongest repugnance to the match. On interrogating the parents, the mother was silent, but seemed to sympathize with her daughter:—The father confessed that he was in good enough circumstances; and had little else to say for urging this marriage than that he wished to see the girl well settled in the world. His lordship here remarked, that he considered himself authorised by his office only to allow or prevent,—but not to compel;—and whenever he saw an unconquerable reluctance, on either side, that it was his part to determine in the negative. On this judgment being announced, the poor girl said nothing, and her tears flowed afresh; but the change on her countenance,—and a slight ejaculation of thankfulness,—spoke too plainly to be mistaken.

"The next case called on was that of *Major Terence O'Whisker* of *Castle Rattledown*, in the county of Tipperary, and *Miss Constantia Buckram*, of the parish of St James's, Westminster. The lady was a good way on the wrong side of forty, and not much gifted with personal charms; but had preserved through life a most immaculate propriety of demeanour. She informed the court, that she had, from her infancy, a

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peculiar aversion to the male sex, whom she had always kept at a distance; and that she had even resolved to die in the single state. But meeting with the Major lately at Buxton, his amiable manners, and importunate passion, had prevailed with her to change her mind. That her fortune, though considerable, could be no object to him, as he was possessed of ancient family estates in Ireland, which he had pointed out to her on the map: and, in fine, that a mysterious attraction of souls seemed to have destined them for each other. On putting a few questions to the Major, there was reason to think that the estates had some time passed out of the family;—that he lived chiefly at gaming-houses;—that he sometimes forgot to pay his reckoning;—and was subject to occasional eclipses from society. The Major declared, however, that he was a man of nice honour; and, though he did owe a few small accounts, so highly was he thought of by his creditors, that they had, in the mean time, suspended all proceedings against his person:—That, with a little ready cash, the family estates might be redeemed at great profit:—'But his sole motive in the present instance' (added he, languishing on Miss Constantia,) 'was irresistible love.' The court, after a short deliberation, gave judgment in the negative;—on which the poor lady sunk back into the arms of her waiting-maid, and was supplied with a smelling bottle;—while the Major, looking fierce, swore that he did not understand such usage; and muttered something about expecting the satisfaction of a gentleman.

"The last pair who came forward were of humble



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life, but not the least engaging of the suitors who had applied—being young and well-favoured. The lad was a journeyman gardener at Chelsea; the girl, the daughter of a cowfeeder in the same neighbourhood. Here the witless things, meeting every day, had fallen in love with each other, before they were aware,—and now wanted to be married. The judge asked them mildly how they proposed to support a family. This question had not occurred to them; and they were somewhat at a loss for an answer:—only they promised to work hard, and live sober, as they had always done;—and whenever they could gather fifty pounds, they might open a little fruit shop with advantage, which would be supplied at an easy rate from his master's garden:—and as for the rest, all would be made up by mutual kindness. The master attended, and gave his word in favour of their character. His lordship had no objection but one. 'Go,' said he, 'and be industrious;—make up your *fifty pounds*, and then come back to me.' The looks of the poor creatures were full of disappointment, but acquiescence. My heart was touched; and taking a fifty pound note from my pocket-book (having in truth folded one up before going to bed), I put it into court for behoof of the young couple; on which decree was given in their favour. The expression of their gratitude filled me with so much pleasure that I awoke;—and (if you will believe me, Mr Keeper) I was less pleased at finding my money, than grieved that so happy an occasion of bestowing it had vanished with my dream.

"I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

"SOMNIOSUS."

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## XXXII. ENGLISH SCHOOLS OF POETRY.

Laudator temporis acti.
HOR.

THERE are certain truths, relative to the person of an individual, which are discovered by every body sooner than himself. Among these is the advance of years;—"Obrepit non intellecta Senectus." The phantom steals upon us unawares, and by such insensible advances, that we still persuade ourselves he is afar off, while all the world sees him at our elbow. At length, however, the symptoms become so strong as to break through the mist of our wilful self-deceit; and we begin to suspect ourselves of growing old, long after our friends have fairly written us down in the sober lists of the aged.

Age, however, when admitted by the patient, is entitled to certain privileges; and, among others, to feel a predilection for the tastes and opinions which were current in former days. As I therefore allow myself to be pretty well advanced, my readers will not surely deny me this prescriptive indulgence. When a man has settled his notions for forty years together, he is apt to be impatient of having them disputed. The very trouble of defending them is irksome, when the faculties are less ready than they once were; and when many convictions remain, while the steps that led to them are forgotten. At all events, there is something humiliating in being obliged to enter the lists with

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petulant children, whom we remember in the bib and back-string.

It does not follow, however, that this turn, though partaking of the nature of a prejudice, always leads to wrong conclusions; or that opinions, because they are new, are therefore right. It seems to be a law of nature, in regard to human sentiments, that nothing shall continue fixed, right or wrong. In matters of reason, of morals, and of taste, what passes in one age as the most received and unquestionable, is in the next despised and exploded. That this endless mutation in human opinions is a great evil, cannot well be questioned. It leads to a despair of truth, and of all fixed standards of assent, in matters of the highest, as well as the most ordinary concern: and is apt to bring on a scepticism and indifference as to all opinions, equally unfavourable to taste and virtue.

With the weightier subjects of reason and morals, I do not mean at present to engage. What I propose to consider is fluctuation in matters of taste, a tendency which produces, in its department, the same evils as it does in the others already mentioned. Taste has its alternations from good to bad, as well as from bad to good: Nor does the possession of the best models secure us from falling back into an admiration, and even preference, of others very inferior. The time has been, when Boethius was preferred to Virgil, and Cowley to Milton.

One evil which attends inconstancy in public taste, is the discouragement which it gives to genius, in its

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noblest exertions. The grand incentive of the human mind is the hope of permanent fame. Nothing but this bewitching dream can support the spirits through the troubles of invention, acquisition, selection, occasional failure, minute elaboration, and all those endless efforts and sufferings which occur in forming a work destined to last for ages. Would Homer, or Sophocles, or Virgil, or Dante, or Racine, or Milton, or Pope, have devoted their days and nights to the completion of their immortal labours, if they had expected that the caprice of taste would one day rank them below the inferior artists of after times? When a man, capable of such undertakings, sees, during his own age, nothing but fickleness in public opinion;—works, which in his youth were the standards of merit, superseded by others totally dissimilar;—and these again dismissed for a third set differing from both;—What, he will ask, can be more hopeless than to fix taste by any settled criterion?—what more worthless and transitory than human applause, which endures only for a season, and is commanded by each in his turn?

There is a collateral evil in such changes of taste,—I mean the ruin to the permanency of language. New ideas of composition give birth to a new coinage of words, which gradually supersede the old;—and render antiquated the works of our standard writers;—till we shall have reason to fear, "That such as Chaucer is, shall Dryden be." It is here that the great authors of antiquity have so much advantage over ours. They are embalmed in the durability of

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the language which they themselves brought to perfection,—as I have endeavoured to express in the following epigram :—

> Tongues called the dead, unchanging, death defy;
> While living tongues, by changing, hourly die.

There is, no doubt, a vicious extreme directly opposite to the love of change,—that of pinning our judgment to a few exclusive ancient models, and discouraging all later exertion. Horace complains of this tendency in his own times; and alleges, that poems were ill received, not because they were dull or inelegant, but merely because they were new. This, however, is not the failing of our days. We seem to give our contemporaries their full measure of applause; and even to sacrifice at their shrine the reputation of the illustrious dead, on whose labours the probation of time hath stamped the only sure impress of immortality.

The multitude, in forming their opinions, are apt, at all times, and on all subjects, to run into extremes. These it is the part of judicious criticism to moderate, —not to flatter and inflame :—and when men's judgments waver under the heat and agitation of change; —and are run away with by the enthusiasm of new impressions;—to examine, with some strictness, the pretensions of the recent favourites, and contrast them with the older and more established models.

This inquiry is far too extensive for a single paper, and is one on which I may have occasion afterwards to recur. To touch on the merits or demerits of contemporaries is always a delicate task; and when I ven-

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ture to do so, it will be rather in the way of defence than of attack;—rather to support others, than to assail them. What I am now about to consider, is a detached theory,—closely connected indeed with the present subject, and serving as an introduction to it; —but which had its origin at an earlier date than most of the existing generation. It comes also from the highest authority:—having been started by one of the first poets and critics of any country, Thomas Gray.

According to this notion, English poetry has been divided into different schools, which are supposed to have drawn their prevailing character from different nations of Europe. Our earlier writers, it is alleged, formed themselves on the Italian model; and indulged in a freedom, variety, and irregularity,—a familiarity with the aspects of nature, rural life, and unpolished passion—which continued till the days of Milton,—the last who is acknowledged as a genuine disciple of that school. The return of Charles II., we are told, introduced an imitation of the French models; in which simplicity of language and description, and natural emotion, gave place to the poetry of town life, and refined artificial manners. It became witty, sententious, polished, moral, and satirical. The powerful genius of Dryden, and the exquisite judgment of Pope, were devoted to the perfecting of this style. Their imitators gradually declined in spirit and invention: and we are informed that, in these latter days, this second poetical phœnix, of Gallic birth and puny constitution, having fairly expired, a third has sprung from its ashes, resembling in vi-

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gour and hardihood its remoter, rather than its more immediate, ancestor.

It is to the first of these transmigrations that I mean at present to confine myself,—the supposed influence of the French poetry upon ours, from the days of Dryden, till near the close of the eighteenth century. This influence seems to me to have been much overrated, and to have given birth to a goodly theory on mighty slender foundations. The whole fact, in short, amounts to this,—That the genius of Dryden and Pope happened to be turned towards moral and satirical poetry:—That they had the good sense to follow their natural bent,—and to arrive at perfection,—instead of vainly exhausting themselves in efforts for which they were unfit:—That it so happened, that in France, a little before their time, Boileau had, with equal judgment, but inferior genius, cultivated the same branch of letters:—And from these premises follows the conclusion, that a French school of poetry was introduced into England, which governed our literature for a century after.

Now, if we look back near two thousand years in the history of letters, we shall find that moral and satirical poetry could arise and flourish, along with the purest strains of the Epic and Lyric muse, without requiring any theory of a foreign influence to account for this. Juvenal and Persius lived but a few years after Virgil and Horace;—and Lucilius lived before them. Nay, Horace united in himself the highest excellence in both kinds. Yet the Roman critics ascribed it to no decay of the poetical spirit, that some

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of their authors cultivated morals and satire; nor did they devise any curious theory of foreign importation to account for the growth of that branch of letters. Indeed, it is generally allowed, that satire, as it appears in their great authors, is the peculiar invention of the Romans themselves. But if it was necessary for our English wits to borrow somewhere, it is as natural to think that they drew from the ancient Roman, as from the modern French school. It is probable, however, that Dryden and Pope would have written nearly as they did, though neither Roman nor French school had ever existed.

But were it even allowed that those two great authors formed themselves on the French model, in their moral and satirical poetry, that constitutes but one branch of the art; and I am not aware that there is any other, where we can trace the supposed infection from the other side of the channel. It will not surely be said, that our drama of the seventeeth century was borrowed from the French. It has neither their merits nor their defects. For, although Dryden has imitated them in the use of rhyme, he was, in every thing else, as remote from them as the antipodes. Instead of their strictness of form,—justness and decorum of conduct,—purity of taste,—and dignified passion;—he deals in improbable bombast, licentiousness, and vulgarity. His imitations of Shakspeare's *Tempest*, and Milton's *Eden*, have been cited as proofs of his departure from his English predecessors. But let his *Conquest of Grenada* be compared with the *Cid* of Corneille,—or his *Conquest of Mexico* with the

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*Alzire* of Voltaire,—and it will be seen whether he approaches any nearer to the French models. The truth is, that the faults of Dryden (while he laboured in a vocation alien to his genius), were peculiar to himself, and the corrupted taste and manners of his times;—and it is unjust to the literature of any civilized people to suppose that he borrowed from them. Indeed, if we are to seek any exterior source for the tumid absurdities of that age, I suspect that we shall find it nearer home. We are told by Dryden, that, in his time, two of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays were acted for one of Shakspeare's:—in other words,—that the ruling taste for rhodomontade was more gratified by the former authors than by the latter. It is in them accordingly, that the first seeds of that extravagant style appear; and their *Philaster*, *Melantius*, and *Caratach*, are the legitimate precursors of the *Almanzors*, *Maximins*, and *Alexanders*, of Dryden and Lee.

It will not, I trust, be supposed that, in these strictures on Dryden, I have failed in respect towards that fertile genius;—the great master and model of English rhyme—as Milton is of blank verse. Even as a painter of nature, Dryden is inferior only to Shakspeare, Milton, and Spenser. Let any who doubt this recollect his Fable of the Swallows, in the Hind and Panther;—the fresh and glowing pictures in the Flower and the Leaf;—the Sea Storm in Cymon and Iphigenia;—or the approach of the Spanish Fleet in the Conquest of Mexico. But in Dramatic Poetry he was not formed to excel.

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Neither does it appear, that the finest examples of our later drama, Otway and Southern, formed themselves on the French school. These great poets were almost as much superior to the French, as Dryden was below them. If they owed any thing to the foreign school, it was the simplicity and justness of their plots, in which they much improved on the incongruous luxuriance of their English predecessors:—But the sweetness of their style,—their natural dialogue,—their powerful passion,—the delicate and lovely vein of figurative poetry which runs through their dramas;—all these qualities relish more of the elder English and Italian school, than of the French. The same remark applies to Lillo,—and even Rowe,—neither of whom drew any part of their inspiration from the Gallic school. The author of our own excellent domestic Tragedy of *Douglas* also adopted the French simplicity of fable; but in this he merely followed the later English Dramatists. His pictures of nature and of passion truly belong to their school.

One play, indeed, of some note in its time, professedly followed the French system,—the *Cato* of Addison:—but it is not as a tragic poet that this amiable author is of any weight in our literature. It may suit Voltaire to place this formal production at the head of the British drama; for, if this be conceded, the superiority of the French will quickly follow. But for us to talk in this way, is doing injustice to Addison himself. His play is indeed a heavy and lifeless copy after the French model;—but, in judging of his merits, let us turn to compositions where he is

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a fertile, and even a poetical inventor:—to those beautiful moral allegories, where reason and virtue come recommended with all the charms of imagination:—where he has borrowed from no one, but has himself remained a model hitherto unapproachable.

If, again, we consider the later comedy of Britain, as little does there appear any copying from the French here. It were well for us had there been more. But Congreve, Vanburgh, Farquhar, and Cibber, resemble Moliere in nothing except the vigour of their wit, the richness of their humour, their easy and finished dialogue:—and unfortunately differ from him in all the decencies, proprieties, and moral example of the stage. The best comedies of our own time, indeed—such as the School for Scandal, the Rivals, and the Clandestine Marriage—have happily combined the merits of both nations.

The poets of greatest note, after Pope, about the middle of last century,—Young, Thomson, Akenside, and Armstrong,—are not only not formed on French models, but resemble nothing then existing in French poetry. The French have, indeed, only three departments in their poetry, possessing any thing so original or characteristic as to serve for a model,—their dramatic authors, Boileau, and La Fontaine. It is in the first of these classes alone that the higher order of poetry is to be found in their language.

Three examples of great though dissimilar poetic genius adorned our literature, towards the close of last century,—Gray, Goldsmith, and Cowper. Gray professedly discarded the French models in all but where

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they deserve imitation,—their just composition, and exquisite finish. He soared to the highest strains of pure poetry, uniting in himself the sublimity of Milton with the sentiment and delicacy of Racine. Goldsmith,—with less splendour,—but with the most enchanting simplicity,—the most natural painting,—the most observant sagacity,—the sweetest numbers,—struck out a line of excellence for himself, in appearing to follow the most common forms of composition:—but neither did he take any thing from the French. Cowper—if not the greatest poet—is the most peculiar and original writer of the three; and is entirely unlike the foreign school, both in subject and manner. The same may be said of the pleasing wildness of Collins. It is true that, towards the middle of the eighteenth century, there occurred a pretty long stagnation of poetical genius; and several professed imitators of Pope degenerated into mere versifiers,—such as Whitehead, Hayley, *et hoc genus omne.* But this proceeded from other causes than the adoption of foreign models; and such authors would have written no better (though, perhaps, in a somewhat different form), whatever taste or style of poetry had prevailed. However dissimilar in form, they are truly on a par in genius, with the manufacturers of strained sentiment, and ambling doggerel, who charm their loving countrymen, in every newspaper, at the present day.

In short, if we have borrowed any thing from the French school, it is merely a taste for more accurate composition, and the dislike of what is extravagant or absurd. In so far I think they have done us no in-

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jury: and I could wish to disabuse some persons of the prevailing notions,—that the invasion of a foreign school, destroyed the vigour of our native muse;—that where there is correctness there cannot be genius;—and that the way to rival our more ancient poets is to copy all their blemishes.

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## XXXIII. ENGLISH SCHOOLS OF POETRY.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. Cic.

Truth dwells in the middle; Error in extremes. In most matters of human opinion, we are, to a certain degree, right: We go wrong chiefly in carrying our notions to excess on one side or the other. We discolour from passion, and generalize with over haste. It must not therefore be supposed, that in the remarks which I made in my last paper, on the successive schools of British poetry, I was blind to the evil of cultivating an over punctilious accuracy; or to the advantage of, now and then, recurring to the earlier elements of the art, and aiming at wilder and loftier beauties. I would avoid violent and exclusive opinions on both sides. I would wish to see united boldness of design with correctness of execution. But the current of public taste is, at present, running so strongly in favour of wonderful reformations and discoveries,—and new undefined modes of excellence,—that I would fain sprinkle a few drops of moderation on the troubled

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waters, lest the commotion end in the utter shipwreck of good sense;—an element which I agree with Horace in thinking the fountain of all excellence in composition, whether prose or verse.

Instead of pursuing this topic farther in my own person, I will avail myself of a conversation which I lately heard at the table of my friend Sir William Constant, who is at present residing with his family in this city.

The subject was started by one of the company quoting some lines of Pope; on which Mr S., a very young gentleman, observed that he was a good versifier. "He was so,"—said Dr T. who had used the quotation, "and something more;—a man of exquisite wit, elegant taste, and profound observation. He had likewise a rich and noble vein of poetry, adapted to the subjects of which he treated."—"Nay," said Mr S., "I cannot allow that he was a poet:—the other qualities I concede."—"If you only mean," rejoined Dr T., "that he was not a poet of the same class as Milton and Shakspeare, there is no room for dispute:—and I will even go farther:—if you insist on confining the name of *Poetry* to such compositions as theirs,—and theirs alone,—why then Pope, and many others who usually get the name, were no poets. 'To circumscribe poetry by a definition,' says Johnson, 'will only show the narrowness of the definer; 'though a definition, which shall exclude Pope, will not 'easily be made.'—To this doctrine I subscribe;—unless you shape your definition as I have just hinted,



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and say that poetry is strictly what Shakspeare and Milton have written, and nothing else. This is plainly a mere verbal dispute; and I should be sorry to quarrel about a *word*, provided you grant the *thing* which I contend for,—namely, that Pope is among the most delightful and excellent of all writers, and one of the chief glories of our tongue."—" I think," said Mr C., " my friend S. might construct his definition more largely than you propose, and yet exclude your favourite. For instance, let us take, as the great elements of poetry, original invention, deep-toned passion, lofty imagination, richness of figurative language: I doubt whether Pope could put in for a great share of any of these.'—" Not so great a share, doubtless," replied Dr T. " as Shakspeare or Milton: yet I do not see how you can deny a rich and beautiful invention to the *Rape of the Lock*,—a tone of powerful passion to the *Epistle of Eloisa*,—or a noble moral sublimity to many passages in the *Essay on Man*. To these must be added some qualities, of good account in poetry, which you have omitted;—a purity of taste, which, amidst so much excellence, admits nothing to offend;—a depth of observation on life and character, which concentrates in a few lines what others diffuse into pages;—a command of language which expresses every shade of thought, in the shortest, completest, and most appropriate way.—I will not now enlarge on his powers in ludicrous composition, which are conceded:—Nor will I mention his Imitations of Horace, wherein we see the literary wonder of an original outdone by a translation; and the most polite

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author of antiquity surpassed in wit, in grace, and in poetry, by a modern :—But I beg to remind you of many serious passages in his poems (particularly the Essay on Man), in which all the ingredients of moral sublimity are united :—And, truly, I know not why similar thoughts, when occurring in Homer and Milton, should be esteemed among the brightest gems of poetry, and be considered in Pope as mere versification. By way of instance, permit me to quote that sublime interrogation describing the agency of the Supreme Being in the instincts of animals ;—

> Who taught the nations of the field and wood
> To shun their poison, and to choose their food?
> Prescient the tides and tempests to withstand,
> Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?
> Who made the Spider parallels design
> Sure as *De Moivre* without rule or line?
> Who bade the Stork, Columbus-like, explore
> Heavens not his own, and worlds unknown before?
> Who calls the council,—states the certain day,—
> Who forms the phalanx,—and who points the way?

" Is there any thing, I beg to ask, more elevating than this in Homer, Milton, or Dante?—Or let me take another short passage, where a different kind of excellence appears. It may be called the summing up of human life, after that striking picture of the bubbles which amuse its progress, from infancy to old age, beginning 'Behold the child,' &c. The lines are these :

> Meanwhile Opinion gilds with varying rays
> The painted clouds which beautify our days;
> Each want of Happiness by Hope supplied,
> And each vacuity of Sense by Pride.



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Now, I would again ask, why such loftiness of fancy, such figurative splendour and propriety, such majesty of numbers, as occur in these passages, should be denied the honours of poetry, merely because they are joined with a depth of observation seldom found in the plainest prose?

"Much, however, as I admire this author, I must allow that he is not so safe a model for study as Dryden. He is somewhat of a *Mannerist*, and never attained the free and flowing harmony of his master."

"I own," said Sir William, "I am inclined to agree with the Doctor, both in his esteem for Pope, and in his notion of the unimportance of the question, whether he is to be called a poet or not.—Rather than limit the definition in his way, however, I would take it in its ordinary latitude and acceptation, and leave poetry a pretty extensive domain, subdivided into numerous provinces and districts, of different aspect and quality. Under this arrangement, we should allow to Pope,—and to many far beneath him,—the name of Poet,—without fearing to confound him with others of equal merit in a higher or lower class. For I conceive that the great object is not to have all labouring in one class, but to have excellence in each. I must observe, however, that if Pope has been unduly advanced, on the one hand, into a comparison with the highest masters in poetry,—he has been treated as unjustly, on the other, (and even by his admirers), in being confounded with men of far less poetical genius, however high their merits of a different kind,—Addison, Swift, and even Boileau. Nor can

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I help protesting against that strange test adopted by Dr Warton, to prove that Pope was no poet, namely, the transposing (or, as Mr Bayes would call it, *transprosing*) his words from the measured form, and arranging them as prose;—an ordeal which neither Homer nor Milton could stand against."

"Well," resumed Mr S. who had begun the conversation, "I am surprised to hear you. When we have, in our own times, such noble examples of poetical power, —of boundless fertility,—of daring imagination,—of overwhelming energy,—of high-wrought refinement,— of splendid novelties in language and versification,—I cannot but wonder at your esteem for the small graces and piddling circumspection of Pope. There is now a taste for *strong emotion*, which demands other gratification than mere elegance. Such writers have had their day. They are quite out of the remembrance of the readers of English poetry."—"If by the readers of English poetry," said Mr Acid, who was of the party, "you mean drawing-room masters and misses, and newspaper critics, I do not think it worth while to dispute with you. But if you allege that Pope is undervalued or forgotten by the best judges and most accomplished scholars of our land, you may as well tell me that we have given up the use of broad-cloth or port-wine. Pope, and his master Dryden, and his scholars Gray and Goldsmith,—had the merit of each carrying what he attempted to perfection;—and that, as Sir William justly remarks, is the great object for us readers.—Shakspeare and Milton did not attain to greater excellence, but to excellence in a higher sphere.

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Our modern adventurers doubtless aim at the loftiest flight;—but their success may be so dubious, as to rank them below those who succeed better in more moderate undertakings. The works of a Claude, or a Poussin, are not placed on a par with the great compositions of Raphael or Titian; but still are prized, far above the history pieces of modern artists."

"Your illustration, my good sir, is not flattering," said Mr C.; "but pray what is your objection to our modern poets? They have the merit of originality, for they imitate no one; and their reputation proves how much they are in favour with their countrymen."—"In a few words," rejoined Mr Acid, "you have started several important subjects of inquiry. And, first, with regard to present popularity,—you must excuse me from holding this as the sure test of permanent fame;—especially in works of a recent date. As to what was said, a little ago, of there being at present an appetite for strong emotion, it is at best a doubtful symptom of the public taste. We do not esteem that as the finest palate, which prefers arrack and usquebaugh to champagne and claret. Besides, I affirm, that the preference of the majority, told by the head, is not,—at any time,—nor in any branch of the arts,—the test or criterion of the highest excellence. The merits of a Milton, or a Raphael, do not strike the multitude so much as the lower beauties of inferior artists. I value the opinion of one good judge above that of a hundred ordinary readers. The tribunal which fixes permanent fame is the opinion of the best judges, transmitted and compared by their successors, from

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age to age. Or as it is expressed by a judicious critic, M. Grimm; 'Il est évident, que s'il y a un goût géné-'ral, il ne s'étend que sur les ouvrages consacrées;—'que le suffrage des meilleurs esprits a rendus respec-'tables;—que les esprits absurdes n'osent plus atta-'quer;—ou qu'ils admirent, non qu'ils en sentent le 'prix, mais parceque c'est une chose convenue.'

"Next, As to the merit of originality, which you claim for our contemporaries, it is a cheap virtue when attained by deserting the great walks of truth and nature, which were trodden by their predecessors:—and which were trodden equally by Dryden and Pope, as by Milton and Shakspeare. Our moderns seem to me to have forsaken, on one side or other, this great road of nature; and to have pursued novelty in by-paths and odd corners. Hence you seldom meet with those views of universal truth and application, which abound in the standard poets of all nations:—Hence their sentiments vibrate between wild extravagance, cloudy mysticism, fantastic over-refinement, and affected simplicity:—They can say nothing easily or naturally:—There is a constant effort after something new, strange, or striking:—The language is as uncouth and affected as the thoughts:—And, from the combination of both, it arises, that the effect always found in reading the best authors,—that of improving with every perusal,—is reversed in their case.—On the other hand, there is a kind of originality which I value far more highly,—that which was pursued by Gray and Goldsmith. They tried no tricks or novelties of subject, diction, or versifica-

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tion: They followed in the footsteps of their great predecessors: and (without further imitation, than that both copied after the same model of nature), equalled them in what is best.—In one word, my objection to our later bards is, that, in avoiding those who have copied Nature, they have lost sight of Nature herself. The Goddess whom they worship is not that enchanting Divinity presented by the great masters of composition, in all the reality, purity, and simplicity of truth. She is a sophisticated pretender, with meretricious graces, and affected airs, and extravagant feelings, and tawdry ornament:—a being conceived, and brought forth, by the depraved imagination of Rousseau. This man's talents were great enough,—and his taste and morals false enough,—to turn the heads of his own countrymen, and corrupt half of Europe. He was always declaiming about Truth and Nature, and never wrote a word in genuine simplicity or sincerity of heart. His whole works,—as well as life,—are a tissue of vanity, paradox, false sentiment, and bad faith. His *pretension* of thought and style so infected the whole French nation, that a common artist could not draw up a catalogue of paintings,—nor a traveller publish a tour through a province,—without a dash of *sentimentality*. Rousseau's mantle, much the worse for the wear, was caught up by the German worthies; and his pedantic libertine *St Preux*, sprung up in a plentiful crop of *Werters*, *Charles Moores*, and fifty other heroes of plays and novels. The contagion has at length reached us; and some of our late poems, and heroes of poetry, are the genuine offspring of this school.

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"I need scarcely say that, in these strictures, I do not include Crabbe. Though the general tone of his poetry, as well as its subjects, be doubtless pitched on a low key, still his graphic painting, truth of sentiment, and simplicity of style, are admirable; and form a striking contrast with most of his contemporaries. Accordingly, I incline to think that some of the powerful pictures in the *Village*, and *Parish Register*, bid fairer for immortality than any of the poetry of the present day. His later works are less perfect."

"And yet our recent poets themselves," said Mr L., "give out that the object of their study is the early English writers."—"They do, no doubt," replied Mr Acid, "now and then, exhibit symptoms of such imitation; but, unluckily, what is power, ease, and nature in the masters, becomes in the disciples effort and affectation. As Voltaire says of the French authors of his day, 'Les écrivains du siécle de Louis XIV. 'eurent de la *force*; aujourd'hui on a des *contorsions*.' —In short, we are at present under the visitation of what my Lord Byron calls the *Revolutionary School of Poetry*;—a School which his Lordship blamed in precept, but eminently supported in practice: And as revolutions of all kinds, though energetic, are transitory, I cannot but fear for the durability of the fame of this prevailing sect."

"I can match the above epigram of Voltaire," said I, "with a proverb in the same tongue, *Comparaison n'est pas Raison*:—What applied to the French authors of his day, may not apply to the English authors of ours. You have, perhaps, systematized rather

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hastily, and certainly do not err on the lenient side. But there is one point on which I agree with you in blaming my contemporaries,—I mean their negligences and affectations of language. The connection between language and thought is so close,—and the importance of language in all composition so great,—that I hesitate not to ascribe to it one-half of the charm of good writing. This will be allowed by all who consider how greatly a poem, so rich in poetical conception as the *Seasons* of Thomson, is debased by the feebleness of the style. His *Castle of Indolence* (a gem of the purest lustre in our poesy) shews how much he afterwards improved in this respect. Now, our modern bards are not only negligent, but full of affectations, in style as well as thought. Hence that confusion of figure,—that wildness of licence,—that lame expression of meaning,—those strained metaphors,—those foreign neologisms,—and sometimes that downright tuneless doggerel,—which distinguish their writings; —and which, strange to tell, are selected for admiration by their favourers." "And yet," said Mr C., "*those graces which are snatched beyond the reach of art*, do not come from study and revisal."— "I certainly do not mean," returned I, "that a poet is to check the ardour of composition, in search of a scrupulous correctness;—or, when happy in the first attempt, that he should afterwards make any change. Correction ought to be rigid, but discriminate. A poet, as well as a painter, may impair his work by overtouching, (though this always betokens some defect of judgment):—But it does not follow that his

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crude sketches should be obtruded on the world as finished compositions. It seems to be a law of our nature, that nothing which comes to hasty maturity has a long duration; and I believe that all works which have endured for ages, are the fruit of slow and patient correction. From this remark I do not except the most fertile, and apparently careless authors,—Homer, Ariosto, Dryden, and even Shakspeare: for however negligent some of those might be, in expunging faults, they probably bestowed care on the finer passages. The Iliad and Odyssey were plainly constructed with elaborate skill,—though the whim of criticism has ascribed them to fortuitous combination;—and of Dryden we know, that his Ode of Alexander's Feast, which was written in twelve hours, cost him a fortnight to correct and polish. His Fables too, the best of his works, are also the most finished;—they have at once the greatest beauties and the fewest faults."

"The great test of poetry," said Mr Acid,—"as of all the other productions of the fine arts,—is the capacity of standing repeated examination. It is not till we have committed verse to memory, and recall it as the delight of our solitary hours, that we feel all the charm of finished composition. Then it is, that the finer passages of Shakspeare, of Milton, of Dryden, of Pope, of Gray, of Goldsmith, of Cowper,—and, let me proudly add, of Robert Burns;—(for even with these names may his be associated):—Then it is, I say, that such passages—noble yet just in thought,—simple in ornament,—rich in harmony,—perfect in expression,—recur upon the mind with never-failing,—nay, in-

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creasing pleasure. But it is then that less careful artists are detected in their faults,—become offensive to our matured judgment,—and are dismissed from our remembrance. How many of our modern bards are fitted to stand this ordeal, I forbear at present from inquiring." *

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## XXXIV. ADVENTURES OF THOMAS WILLIAMS.

Mores multorum hominum vidit.
HOR.

IT has been remarked by one of my ingenious predecessors in this city, in the art and craft of periodical instruction, that men are punctual in performing those promises which are agreeable to their inclination. In conformity with this wholesome principle, I proceed to discharge a debt of that kind, which I incurred some time ago, in undertaking to lay before my

* It appears by some late importations of plays and novels from France, that the *Revolutionary School of Poetry* is flourishing there, with a vigour which eclipses us entirely. This is indeed a sign of the times, in the country of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire. The extreme is perhaps not to be regretted. Such abominations,—like the exhibition of the drunken Helot to the youthful Spartan,—may operate as a warning and a cure. It has happened before in literature

That Shame regained the post which Sense betrayed,
And Virtue called Oblivion to her aid.

—See, for an account of the above productions, *Quarterly Review*, No. 101, Art. 8.

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readers the adventures of a young man, named Thomas Williams, who had formerly been a servant in my family.

The events which I am about to narrate happened several years ago, while I was residing in the country. One morning, at that time, Mrs Kitty, my sister's favourite abigail, came up to my study, and said,—"La, Sir! only think who is come to see you!"—"Why, Kitty," returned I,—"if I did think, I should probably think wrong; so you had better tell me at once,—if it be no secret."—"Secret! my stars, sir,—it's only Tom Williams,—the lad as was once in this house,—and went away with the English gentleman, you know.—He's come out to see his friends, and just called to inquire for us all;—and he would wish to pay his compliments to your honour, like,—if you were at leisure."—"Let him come up then, Kitty, I am quite at leisure."—"But your honour will hardly know him.—He's so much grown,—quite a tall proper young man, your honour."—"Well, Kitty, send him up,—proper or improper,—tall or short."

The youth soon made his appearance, and justified the panegyric of Mrs Kitty, by his good looks. After he had made suitable inquiries for all the family,—particularly my little nephew, whose preceptor and play-fellow he had been, in all out-of-door exercises;—I asked him how he had thriven since we parted?—"Ah, your honour," said he, "I have had but a bustling life of it since I left you. I have been in many places, but none where I was so well off as here, if I had

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had but sense to know when I was well."—"Sit down Tom," said I,—"sit down,—and rest yourself, for a minute or two;—and tell me your adventures." I always had a liking to the lad, for his good disposition, and kindness to his parents, who are small tenants on my own ground.—After a respectful bow, he seated himself, and began thus:

"You know, sir, when I was in your service, I was but young and light-headed, and did not know what was good for me. My parents advised me to be satisfied where I was; but I longed to see the world; and once when your honour was on a visit at Sir William Constant's, where there were two English gentlemen, I fell much in company with their grooms; who boasted of the pleasures of London,—and of going about in the service of a single gentleman;—and told me, that so brisk a young fellow should not stick, like a mushroom, to the dunghill where I grew:—These, sir, were their foolish words, and I was fool enough to believe them.—So, one of the gentlemen, whose servant was leaving him, offered to hire me;—and the notion of riding behind him, and keeping a pair of smart horses, got the better of my judgment,—and so I went.

"I soon found I had made a bad exchange, for the ease and kindness I met with in your honour's family.—I worked late and early, and was never thanked for it. Nothing but faults to find, ill-humour, and hard language. While we continued in Scotland, I was hacked about from place to place without ceasing: and soon after, I accompanied my master to London.

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He was one of those gentlemen who value themselves on the speed of their riding;—and, in that way, while I was with him, he killed two horses. But what was his praise and boast he could not forgive in me;—and one evening having ridden home rather quick from a message in the country, (it being dreadful snow and rain), my master abused me worse than a pickpocket, —turned me out of doors,—and ended by declaring, that he was sure I would be hanged.

"In this friendless state, I went to an office for hiring servants; where, after some time, I was recommended to the Lady Whimsey. I was told that she was somewhat particular to please, but in the main a very good lady; and the first part of the character, I found, was true enough. It is impossible to tell all the maggots and vagaries which came into her head; or how difficult it was to know what would please, or what displease her. She changed her mind fifty times in a day, and her orders as often; and sometimes she was angry with me for obeying too quickly, and sometimes for delaying too long; nay, when they were so opposite to each other that I did not know what to do, she would rage at me for not understanding her meaning. She used to say that she could never get any body to comprehend her feelings. I am sure I could not. For she would at times endure being squeezed all the forenoon at an auction, or all the evening at a rout or play; and yet, next morning, the creaking of a door,—a knife or spoon laid wrong at breakfast,—the bread being too much or too little toasted, —her lap-dog being ill combed,—or any such matter,

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—would throw her into such a passion,—(so lacerate her feelings, as she called it)—that there was no living in the house with her. You will guess, sir, that I was often so unlucky as to displease her, all that I could do;—and having also some difference with an old starched waiting-maid, who was her chief counsellor; I was suddenly turned off one morning, for placing the tongs and poker on wrong sides of the grate.

"I was next engaged by one Mr Indigo, a gentleman who had made a fortune in the East. As he was desirous of cutting a figure in the fashionable world,—and, among other things, of being thought a good horseman,—my duty was to give him lessons,—for you know, sir, I have been fond of horses all my days, and was thought to be not a bad rider. I did all I could to bring him on;—but one unlucky Sunday, when he was attending some ladies in the Park, his horse became unruly, and, in spite of all I could do, tumbled him off, in sight of the whole company. He chose to lay the blame on me, though I almost broke my neck in trying to save him, and parted with me that very evening.

"The next place I went to was that of a dowager lady of quality, called the Countess of Castle-Sables, who lived alone in a great house in Grosvenor Square. She kept much state and solemnity,—ate off plate, which was all covered over with coronets and family-arms,—and had always two footmen and a butler to serve at table. At a particular hour in the forenoon, she took some turns in the gallery of family pictures; and afterwards went out an airing in her coach, drawn by four



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long-tailed horses, with the coachman and footmen in rich liveries. Besides this, she had a private sedan-chair, which stood in the saloon, covered with gilding; and laced great-coats and cocked hats for her chairmen. She never demeaned herself to speak to any servant but the butler, and her own maid;—through whom her orders were given to the rest. I do not think, all the time I was in the house, that she ever called me by my name. When she wanted me, it was always,—"Young man,"—or, "Who waits?" My life, however, went on quietly enough; as I was well lodged, clothed, and fed, and had not much work;—till one day, that I was opening the carriage-door in a hurry, I fell, and the wheel going forward, went over my leg, and broke it. On this I was paid my wages, and discharged;—her ladyship remarking how unlucky she was, in meeting with this troublesome accident, just as she was setting out for Buxton.

"After I had got my leg cured, I fell into a pleasant easy place,—my master, Mr D'Oily, of Portsoken-ward, being a rich citizen, retired from business. Besides his house in Budge Row, he had a villa near Hampstead: and as he had no children, his wife and himself were the only members of the family. At his villa he kept a nice bowling-green, where his friends used to come out and play with him on Saturdays; but as he had no one else, on the other days of the week, to join in the game, he would needs teach me: and I well remember him, in his white night-cap, after dinner, telling me the rules, and laughing,



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every now and then, at my awkwardness, and ill-play. Unluckily for me, however, I improved too fast. You see, sir, I have always been a fool,—and quarrelled with my bread and butter. In short, I became keen in the sport; and one afternoon was so light-headed as to beat the good old gentleman two games running. From that moment my favour was at an end:—and soon after, he told me he was going upon a journey, and I might provide myself elsewhere.

"I next was a few months in the family of Sir George and Lady Dashwell, who kept one of the gayest houses in London. All I had gone through before was ease and quiet compared to the life I led now. We had company at home, two or three times a-week; who usually did not separate till late in the morning. And, on the other days, I had to attend her ladyship and the young ladies to half a dozen parties, public or private, of an evening;—and wait many hours in the open air, or cold lobbies. After all this, I was obliged to get up betimes, to go messages, and deliver cards, over half the town; besides carrying orders to hair-dressers, milliners, shopkeepers, lacemen, chinamen, dealers in dogs, monkeys, birds, flowers,—and a thousand such like,—which no head could remember, nor legs stand out. I was therefore obliged to ask my discharge, which was readily granted: but when I spoke about wages, I was called a presumptuous dog, for daring to trouble a genteel family with such trifles. On finding all applications vain, I had thoughts of taking the law:—but a fellow-servant, who tried that shortly before, told me that

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he recovered his full wages and costs,—but spent twice as much as both together on the lawyers;—so I e'en put up with the first loss, and remained quiet.

"I need not trouble your honour with all the other changes I went through.—How I served a gamester for six weeks, with whom I shared in all his turns of fortune,—now in full living, now in spare,—as the dice went up or down;—till, on a hard run, he suddenly set off for Paris, and left me to shift for myself.—Or how I lived,—or rather starved,—two months, with a miserly scrivener, till I was almost brought to skin and bone, like himself, his parrot, and his cat,—which were all the members of his family.—Or how I served a poet, who, instead of wages, made me hear his verses,—always putting me off till the third night of his new play, when he said I should be paid like a prince. But, alas! the third night never came. His play was dispatched the first.—They said, in the newspapers, that it was *damned*—but I am sure there was no sin in it, nor harm of any kind.—However, my wages went along with it. He offered me, instead, some manuscript poems, which he said would one day make my fortune, when the public recovered from its present bad taste;—but I preferred taking an old great-coat.

"The last place, I was in, sir, (continued he, hesitating a little), I am not sure whether I should trouble your honour about, or not. But your honour is good, and will make allowances. It was with a Quaker, who kept a little thread shop at Paddington; and who—though now well to live—had begun the world



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no better than myself. As I had a knowledge of figures, he took me, partly as a servant, and partly to help in the shop. The only other person in the family, besides the cook, was his daughter,—a sweet civil pretty young woman, sir, as ever you saw:—and as we were often left alone together, while her father was abroad among his customers,—I don't know how it was, sir,—but somehow we took a fancy to each other.—I am sure I never would have presumed to think of the like of her;—but she looked so kind, and sweet in her modest quaker dress:—In short, sir, a kindness grew up between us. But her father soon discovered all. He reproached us with deceiving him, which I am sure I never did—having no such design: And I assure you, sir, there was nothing wrong between her and me: And he also called me a Scotsman, and a Formalist, and turned me out of doors. The young woman, however, continued to write to me afterwards, promising to be true-hearted; but I only could see her once before I came to Scotland in my present service. I have since received another letter from her, which I would make bold to show your honour, if you would take the trouble to read it."

With that he pulled from his pocket a little parchment cover, from which he took out a letter neatly folded and written, which he put into my hand. It was addressed "For Thomas Williams, present servitor with Sir John Justice, at Edinburgh City, in Scotland. These"—and ran as follows:—

"DEAR THOMAS, MY ONLY TRUE LOVE,—

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"Though I did haply commit a fault in first loving thee, yet it arose not from lightness or wanton thoughts: nor can I repent me thereof, except in so far as it displeaseth my father. I hope he will relent, and yet send for thee to return unto us. But if not, await, and prove constant, as I will ever be. And when he is removed, I shall have wherewithal for thee and me. Yet will I cherish him all his days, as a faithful daughter. I have the lockit with thy hair, which thou gavest me, and kiss it daily. Dost thou so by mine? Farewell! and keep single for my sake.—Thine

"EDITH TRUBY."

"Do you think, Tom," said I, returning the letter, "that I could be of any use to you in writing the old man? I can safely speak well both of yourself and those you come of."—"I would be much beholden to your honour," said he.—"Well," returned I, "come back to me on Saturday, and we shall see what can be done."

At this moment, my little nephew came into the room; and recognising his old acquaintance and play-fellow, he rushed into his arms. The lad seemed equally pleased with the meeting. I did not dislike this trait of recollection in the boy: and as he would by no means quit his companion, they left the room together.

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## XXXV. ADVENTURES OF THOMAS WILLIAMS.

Celebrare domestica facta.

HOR.

The short and simple annals of the poor.

GRAY.

IN furtherance of the little love affair mentioned in the conclusion of my last paper, I wrote to the worthy Quaker, as I had promised, in behalf of the young man Williams; mentioning the good character of himself and his kindred; and giving, at the same time, some references to persons in London, at whom inquiries might be made about myself. A fortnight afterwards, I received an answer in the following terms:—

"*Paddington, this 4th day of the 8th month.*

"FRIEND UNKNOWN.—I received thy missive writing of the eighteenth day of the seventh month ult., wherein thou commendest unto me, as a fitting helpmate for my daughter Edith Truby, a youth formerly in my house (and it appeareth also in thine), by name Thomas Williams. Thy purpose may be good, but thy discretion I approve not:—for what communion can there be between an Englishwoman of the Society of Friends, and a Scottishman, and Presbyterian Formalist? Howbeit thou sayest he was a youth well-doing from his infancy;—and that his kindred, though poor, are sober and righteous. It

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is not therein that I scruple. I was once poor myself, though my labours have had a blessing; and I prize above all lucre an honest heart and a kind.

"But he is of Scotland;—and I have ever believed that no good thing cometh from thence. Moreover, as to thy commendations I am doubtful;—inasmuch as I have heard say that a Scottishman loveth his country better than truth. Yet have I communed with several, who say that thou art trustworthy; and it is borne in upon my mind to believe thee. But again,—the youth hath been bred in the formalities of a proud *Establishment*, and despiseth our pure and simple worship.

"Nevertheless, my mind is tossed to and fro, and I wis not what to do. My heart misgave me, in putting the youth away, for his demeanour had been gentle. And, since he departed,—though my daughter hath abstained from tears and lamentations,—and nothing abated in her cares of me;—yet the rose hath faded from her cheek,—she shunneth her food,—and pineth away in secret. Can I render evil unto her, for all the good she hath done unto me? I have known what it is to love; and my heart melteth in compassion for her.

"Therefore let the youth come up unto us, and they shall be made one flesh. As to his religious faith I object not. I would not have him change but upon conviction. A forced conversion availeth nought; and all troubling for conscience-sake I hold as an abomination. But let him be dutiful unto me, and a cherishing helpmate unto my child, for verily

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her price is above rubies.—I remain thy friend (though unknown) to serve thee,

"EPHRAIM TRUBY."

This letter contained one from his daughter to her lover, to whom I sent them both, as he was still among his friends in my neighbourhood. He came to me next day to thank me for my interference; and at the same time showed me his fair mistress's letter, which was as follows:—

"DEAR THOMAS, MY LOVE.—My father hath yielded, partly to the intercession of the good gentleman who did befriend thee,—and partly, I believe, to my grief;—for I have inly pined since thou didst leave us. He consenteth that thou shouldst be my husband; and he saith that he will not speak touching thy religious faith, but will leave it to thine own judgment. And truly, though I have reason to love the simple bearing of our sect, yet did not my mother cleave thereunto while a maiden: and hence I feel not for it a zeal beyond knowledge. Nay, I would be well content to adopt thy outward garb and forms, keeping always mine ancient purity within. Yet this will I not do, to vex my father, who meriteth all duty from us both. Tarry not then, my beloved, from coming unto us; for life is too short to allow any delay of happiness.—Thy faithful

"EDITH TRUBY."

As the young man felt some awkwardness in ex-

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plaining this change in his prospects to his present master, I undertook that office, and easily procured his discharge. The first accounts I heard of him were about a month afterwards, by the following letter from himself:—

"*London, 29th August.*

"HONOURED SIR,—I left Edinburgh soon after I last saw you, and came straight up to London, where I now am well, at this present writing,—hoping you are the same, and Miss Judith, and Mr Harry: And as your honour was so kind as to ask of me to let you know by a line how matters went with me, I now sit down so to do, though but a bad penman to make bold to write to the like of your honour;—yet you was so kind to me, that I thought you might be pleased to hear of my well-doing, being, as I may say, the work of your own hands;—and I should be very ungrateful (which I am not), if I allowed my present good fortune to make me forget what you did for me.

"I arrived safely by the coach in London, stopping twice on the way, once at Newcastle, and once at York; that is, by three different coaches, which take up one after another,—the Highflyer, the Wellington, and the Blue Dragon. It would be presuming in me,—and not now needful,—to trouble your honour with my poor remarks,—being, your honour knows these things better than me; but, to my thinking, the wind-mills about Newcastle look ill beside our water-mills in Scotland; and as for the York Minster, which they talk so much about, what is it

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compared to the Old Kirk at Glasgow? In passing near Grantham, our coach was well nigh overturned into a ditch (though I own they do understand horses in this country), but we escaped with little damage,—only I lost my whip,—and a fat elderly gentleman, who was asleep, drove his head through the window, but he was nothing the worse. The country about Witham Common is bare and dull, and nothing that I could say that would be amusing to your honour, except a man hung in chains at the fifth milestone, for a barbarous and bloody murder committed on the body of a young woman of these parts, who was his sweetheart. When we came near to London we found the crops further on than they were about Edinburgh, though not so much neither; and they were plowing their fallows with a power of bestial that we would call a mere waste and folly. Howsomever, I need not mention these things to your honour, who knows well about them. We arrived in London at half-past three o'clock, as near as I guess, on Saturday afternoon, and stopped at the Swan with Two Necks, Ladlane; where there is civil entertainment, in case your honour was coming this way;—though perhaps you might think it rather far from the Park, and Opera House, and St James's, and such like; and indeed it is a little noisy too,—being, there are two smiths, and a brazier, and a musicianer over the way,—besides the church bells at the corner.

"Your honour may be sure I was not long in going to see old Mr Truby, and my dear Edith his daughter, who was very glad to see me, though she

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cried a little at first; and the old man was civil enough too, though something shy or so, but it wore off after a while. He would needs have our wedding put off for a fortnight; and all this time I continued to put up at the Swan with Two Necks, where charges were reasonable; and I was taken about to see the bride's relations and acquaintances. They were most, but not all, of the Quaker persuasion, and very decent sort of people, though rather still; and I thought they looked a little shy of me, for not being a Quaker like themselves. But I have no thought of that, and the old man does not insist on it. So the wedding took place, as I told your honour, a fortnight after I came; and it was not like any wedding you ever saw in our own country; for here all was silent and quiet, and for my share I liked it all the better, and so did poor Edith, who could not have stood the noise and hurry of a Scottish wedding,—though I would not say any thing against that neither, for all things in their place and season. It is now three weeks past on Tuesday, and we live with the old man, and Edith takes care of him, and I help in the shop, as I used to do; and we are all as happy as we can desire to be, and I am sure it is more than I deserve. But I never forget how much of it I owe, under Providence, to your honour; and if you had a thought of coming to London, and would be agreeable to come out our way, I am sure that my wife and myself, and the old man, would all be very happy to see you. So, no more at present, but rests your humble servant to command,

"THOMAS WILLIAMS."

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" P. S.—I make bold to trouble your honour with a pair of gloves;—also for Miss Judith, and Mr Harry. Please forward the enclosed to my father."

The letter to the old man I delivered to him myself, being still in the country; and at the same time told him, if there were no secrets in it, I should like to see it. He brought it to me next day, with tears in his eyes, saying there was nothing in it but what did his *bairn* credit, and was a pride and joy to his grey hairs. The letter was as follows.

" *London, 29th August.*

" DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—Having the opportunity of a private hand, I enclose this in a cover to his honour, who will cause it to be delivered to you. I got well to London, by the blessing of Providence, after leaving you; though we met with a little trouble on the road, yet it was of no serious consequence, only I lost the whip my brother Dick gave me, for which I was sorry. I found all things favourable to expectation here, and was well treated by my young bride and her friends. The wedding was a fortnight after I came, but was not like one of our weddings in Scotland. I remember, at my sister Jeanie's, there was such a noise, and drinking, and junketting, as if all were mad;—and bride-cakes, and throwing the stocking, and riding the *broose*, and what not. Here it was all the other way;—quite grave and quiet-like;—neither dancing nor liquor, but just a glass of wine or so;—and yet, to my think-

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ing, it was respectful-looking too. And we had plenty of feasting among our friends after, and were merry enough when we got better acquainted. My wife said, she wished my sister Nanny had come up with me, to be bridesmaid; but you know I could not do that till I saw whether matters would be agreeable; —and she has packed up some little keepsakes for her, and the rest, which will sail per the Leith smack *Morning Star*, from Miller's Wharf, on the 7th proximo, which his honour will give directions how it is to be sent you. But be sure you do not let him pay the carriage:—the freight is all paid at the wharf here. Dear father, I send you enclosed a Bank of England note for ten pound, which shall be repeated every quarter-day, at my good-father's desire. In return, he hopes you will pray for us all, and that our happiness may continue. As to my religious faith, you need be in no concern, for they give me no trouble about it, and are themselves very pious in their way. And there is one of my own persuasion preaches in a meeting-house near London Wall, where I go on Sundays, and sometimes my wife goes with me. I cannot ask you to part with my brother Dick, who is useful to you at the farm; but in a month or two, if you would send up little Will, I think I can provide for him in the shop, and his education shall be well looked after. My wife sends her love to you all, and hopes you will like her presents: Being, dear father and mother, your loving son till death,

"THOMAS WILLIAMS."

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Within the proper time after the events above recorded, old Williams came to me with accounts of the birth of a grandson. Enclosed in his letter, was one for me from the worthy Quaker, as follows.

"*Paddington, 21st day, 7th month.*

"Good friend, yet unknown in outward figure, though known in works, I should account myself ungrateful, did I abstain from returning thee thanks for the helpmate thou didst commend unto my daughter, Edith Truby. Ever since they became one flesh, he hath cloven unto her as a faithful husband, and unto me as a son;—and of late, when she hath been laid up with her sore travail, (to which God hath sent a blessed deliverance in the birth of a man-child,) he hath been a prop unto us all. When thy occasions call thee hitherward, I pray thee come unto us, that we may give thee our thanks in presence, as now absent thou hast our prayers.—Thy continuing well-wisher,

"Ephraim Truby."

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## XXXVI. EDINBURGH MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

Ille canit:—Pulsæ referunt ad sidera valles.
VIRG.

Meantime was heard the sound
Of chiming strings, and charming pipes.
MILT.

ALL the world knows that we have occasionally had a Festival of Music here in Edinburgh;—a solemnity which alone was wanting towards the thorough *Atticism* of this our Northern Metropolis. These I have always made it a point to attend, and shall here put down a few notes, which I took during our late celebration devoted to the powers of harmony. On the professional part of this entertainment it is not my purpose to enlarge; for although nature has enabled me to take great pleasure in the concord of sweet sounds, I have no such scientific knowledge of the art, as to entitle me to pronounce, with authority, on an occasion like this. Suffice it to say, that, as far as I could judge for myself,—or hear from others better skilled,—the satisfaction was just and general with managers, performers, and performances. There is, indeed, something in sacred music when executed by so large and perfect an orchestra, vocal and instrumental (particularly the works of such masters as Hadyn, Mozart, and above all Handel), which affects me more strongly than any other branch of the art. The sublime harmony of the choruses gives relief to the sweetness and pathos of the single

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songs; and there is associated with the subject an elevated and transporting sentiment, which communicates a character to sacred music belonging to no other.

My attraction to this assembly, however, was not confined to the harmony to be heard there. To an observer of human nature, men collected in crowds, and on unusual occasions, seldom fail to afford matter of interest and amusement. The struggle which takes place between the conventional forms of politeness, and the original selfishness of the human heart;—with the outbreakings of this latter principle more prominently than appears under the common restraints of society;—afford so many pictures of instructive satire and contemplation, that I was pretty assiduous in my attendance on the late occasion.

The Oratorios were performed in the morning, in that great Hall wherein the Parliament of Scotland formerly assembled, now used as a sort of vestibule to the Courts of Law, and thence denominated the *Outer-House*. This noble apartment is 130 feet long, with Gothic windows, under a massy oaken roof, somewhat after the manner of Westminster Hall; and, on the present occasion, was fitted up, at one end, with an orchestra extending from the ground to the ceiling; while all the rest of the floor was covered with forms or benches for the audience, in regular rows, from side to side. The whole of this space was filled to the walls with gazers and listeners, seated on a uniform level; and exhibited, under this arrangement, the finest example of Sir Richard Blackmore's *Sea of Heads*,



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that could be imagined. The caps and bonnets of the ladies formed a perfect bed of tulips, composed of all the colours of the rainbow: but I must own that the upper extremities of my own sex were less engaging. Among the younger branches, indeed, the hyacinthine locks were becoming enough, when left to cluster round their brows as nature designed; and not tortured, by the caprice of fashion, into a resemblance of the *plica polonica*. But the elders exhibited a beggarly show of bald pates; and, by their appearance, confirmed my predilection for the exploded accommodation of a peruke, which shrowds up such unseemly varieties in a decent uniformity.

The musicians, vocal and instrumental, now began to drop in. Here a performer was seen striding down the long steps of the orchestra, brandishing his trumpet:—There you beheld two honest Yorkshire choristers, shaking hands after their journey:—Here one of the leaders, stretching across to give orders, overturned a music stand:—There, in reaching down a bassoon, it came bob against an obvious pate:—At one side, a disconsolate fiddler, having got a wrong instrument, was hurrying about to retrieve his own:—At another, a mighty double bass was crawling up, from hand to hand, *like a huge snail along the wall*, in the manner of Baucis and Philemon's elbow chair:—Here a sequestered female of the choir, was conning her part:—There a parcel of singing boys were tripping among the benches like mice. Soon after, the startling peal of the organ gave the note of preparation; and certain



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ill-favoured screwings, thrummings, and twanglings, (relieved by the occasional snap of a fiddle-string), indicated the approach of serious business. The audience now took their seats,—a few lingering on their feet, for a little space, to enjoy the pleasure of seeing, or being seen. A pause of expectation ensued. At length the short preluding tap was given by the leader of the band;—and away they burst, in a mighty flood of sound.

But it was in the theatre, where the evening concerts of miscellaneous music were performed, that my chief field of observation lay. The inequality of surface, and variety of position here (the audience being stowed indiscriminately in pit, boxes, and galleries), afforded more favourable points of view for reconnoitring:—while the great distinction among the different seats, as to convenience and fashion, caused a much livelier competition than took place in the morning entertainments. For my own part, as my object was somewhat different from that of most others, I was content, every night, to station myself at a box-door, where I had freedom of moving to the different parts of the house;—and resisted all the entreaties of my friend Lady Evergreen (seconded by the most inviting nods and smiles from Miss Phebe Pliant,—and one or two frowns of rebuke from sister Judith, who was there bestowed) to take a seat by her in the front row.

From my post of observation, it was amusing to see the multitudes shoaling in through various openings, above, below, and on every side. As there was no respect of persons, those who came first had

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their choice;—all distinctions of rank were obliterated;—and persons of the first figure (albeit unused) were happy to take refuge in the shilling gallery. The eager looks of all, on their first entrance, mixed with doubt as to their ultimate fate:—Their hurried glance around, in search of places:—The hesitating moment, and rapid consultation, which to choose:—The rudeness with which some shoved past:—The sturdy resistance of others:—The half-contented acquiescence with which one squatted himself down on the nearest seat he could get:—The enterprizing disdain of another, who rushed away in search of better fortune:—The various expressions of surprise, disappointment, and indignation, of some who struggled in the passages:—With the smiling tranquillity of others, who looked on from a snug seat in the centre;—all this formed a moving picture, which was far from the least amusing part of the solemnity.

In one corner you might descry friends, nodding to each other from a distance, whom the eddying flood had separated past hopes of rejoining. In another, a lady standing in the passage cast her sweetest looks at a seated gentleman of her acquaintance, who was struck with an inveterate purblindness, which prevented him from recognising her;—that *malady of not marking* which Falstaff was troubled withal. Here a slender stripling looked grudgingly on a plump elderly lady, whose outward woman took up as much space as would have served three of his make. There two pretty young creatures squeezed themselves into



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the breadth of a ribbon, to make room for an agreeable beau.

I stood some time at the door of a box where there were two vacant benches in front. The prescribed rule of being kept by a servant was omitted; but the box-keeper having told us that the seats had really been taken by a very respectable family,—and that the servant had just been called out,—many stood at the door, hesitating whether or not to go forward. In the midst of these doubts arrived a female leader of the *haut ton* at the box-door; and on learning the dilemma, she, with the utmost coolness, made her way through us all,—stalked on with her party,—and occupied the vacant places, with the dignity of an empress.—"Well," said one of the bystanders thus superseded, "there is a degree of impudence which actually approaches to the sublime."

Some time after the performance was begun, a party came up to another box-door, led by a bustling matron, also of distinguished mode. On peeping in, and finding every place full,—"Bless me," cried she, "what a foolish crowd! How absurd it is to be squeezing in so early! And not a spot left for persons of condition: — I wonder people can't stay at home till a decent hour:—But really when inferior persons are allowed in this way:—After taking an early dinner, too, on purpose, with Mrs Feelwell:—And now it is scarce nine o'clock:—Well, it is very provoking:—The thing has been quite mismanaged after all."—"Intolerable!"

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exclaimed a fat choleric gentleman, whom I had seen making abortive attempts in various quarters,—"It is not to be borne. I will lay my life the managers are in a plot to deceive the public. They ought to be cashiered. It is all owing to shuffling and underhand dealing to accommodate their own friends. I will expose them, I'm resolved." A party, seemingly from the country, and consisting of father, mother, and daughters, after struggling a long time in the passage of the pit, turned to go away, in utter despair. I could just hear one of them exclaim—"Really if this is all we are to get for coming a hundred miles, we had better have staid at Cubhall."

I now fell in with a knot of amateurs criticising the performance:—"Well," cries one,—"what say you to the Catalani to-night?"—"Why, poor enough. She was once a tolerable *Cantatrice*, but is now *passée*. That *maestoso* movement, in the last song of Rossini, was quite a failure. Besides, she cannot sing a note in tune."—"Then," said another, "our little Stephens has a pretty thread of voice,—but no science."—"As for old Braham," observed a third, "he was a reasonably fair *tenore*, a dozen of years ago; but has dwindled into a mere thin *soprano*." I could not but admire the liberality of those gentlemen, who gave their money for so small a return.

Soon after this, a gentleman appeared at a box-door near the spot where I stood, with a lady leaning on his arm, pretty, but affected and languishing. "Is there no room, my dear?" said she.—"Not that I see, my love."—"Surely the people will make way for us:

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—They cannot let us stand here:—How selfish!—Surely they might sit closer in the front seats."—These complaints were at length heard. One or two gentlemen gave up their seats entirely; and the rest so adjusted themselves as to provide a place for this fair mourner, and one for her husband on the row behind. Some time after, turning to him,—"My dear," said she, "we are so crowded in this box, and so hot;—and then there is a cold air comes in from the door:—Pray desire those gentlemen in the back row to go out, and shut the door:—We shall be more comfortable." The affectionate spouse, I perceived, was a little nonplussed at this request;—these gentlemen being the very persons who had made room for them. He leaned forward, and expostulated with her earnestly in a whisper. All that I could overhear was her answer, as she ran her finger round the inside of her necklace,—"Bless me, how very hard! How unaccommodating people are!"

As I was strolling through the passages, during a pause in the performance, I met my friend Mr Acid. "What, you here!" exclaimed I.—"To be sure," said he; "you will always find me where fools are assembled."—"Aye,—like a shark after the shoals. But I thought you abhorred and despised a crowd."—"Yes,—one which pretends to *think* and *deliberate*; for, as men increase in number, they diminish, by an exact ratio, in reason and common sense. But, on this occasion, they merely *hear* and *stare*."—"Well," rejoined I,—"you are a calculator. What proportion of the numbers here present have real enjoyment in

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the music?"—"Why," said he, after ruminating a little, "about one-tenth take real pleasure in it:—Another tenth had as lief stay as go:—As for the rest, they sit in absolute tedium and sufferance; and were it not for fashion, imitation, curiosity, and vanity, would be happier amidst the *whirring* of a cotton-mill."

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## XXXVII. FUNERAL OF MR AUBREY.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit Deus.
HOR.

SOME of my correspondents complain that the tone of my speculations is too uniformly sportive and trifling; and seriously ask me, whether life has no more important cares, than dress, and fashion, and public places, and the foibles of ordinary behaviour.

As my great object is to be useful, I own that I am a good deal struck with those complaints; and should be sorry that my readers thought me indifferent to serious duties, because I do not often enforce them in a very solemn or direct manner. Lucretius and Tasso have told us, that we must sweeten the cup of knowledge to make it palatable; and Horace expresses his conviction that one may at the same time laugh, and tell useful truths. Were I to inculcate my lessons *ex cathedra*, in too direct and magisterial a manner, I might please a few readers, but I should risk the loss of many, who are impatient of being

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schooled, and must be coaxed and cheated into a little improvement. The example of the *Rambler*, which is sometimes held up to me, would be dangerous for any one to follow, who did not possess a mind of the same lofty and serious cast as its author: and high as the merit of that work is, in its way, a greater variety of subject and manner might have recommended its graver lessons to many who are repelled by the austerity of its present form. There is a further risk, in inculcating truth by general and abstract propositions (a risk which, in that work, is not wholly avoided) of overshadowing thoughts, trite and obvious enough, with a sonorous amplitude of words, which fill the ear without informing the mind.

It is also to be considered, that, by the excellent system of weekly religious instruction adopted in this country, we are accustomed to hear the great lessons of religion and morality inculcated with an authority which no other teacher can assume; and explained so fully as to leave little room for addition. The large body of sacred eloquence too, preserved by the press, in our language, makes all readers familiar with such topics; and exposes any less qualified preceptor who encroaches on them, to the hazard of at once being an imitator, and of imitating feebly and superfluously.

These considerations have determined me to confine myself more to the lesser morals, and decencies of society, than to the higher concerns of mankind. But an event has lately occurred which disposes my mind to reflections of the most serious and solemn cast, and my readers will, I trust, pardon me for indulging them.

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On returning home from my walk, a few days ago, I found on my table a funeral letter which invited me to attend the last duties to be paid my friend Mr Aubrey. This was the first intimation which I had received of his death, but it afflicted more than it surprised me. His health had long been such as to lead both himself and his friends to look for the event which had now happened, and few men could be better prepared for a higher state of existence. Mr Aubrey's life had been, in the ordinary estimation of worldly opinion, unfortunate. He had been born to an independent fortune: and had engaged in a learned profession, rather to please his friends, and as a resource of liberal study, than with views of emolument. He had married an amiable woman, by whom he had two children: but several years afterwards, when past the middle of life, by extending friendly help to others,—added to a singular combination of adverse chances,—and without an act of extravagance or improper indulgence on his own part,—he found himself nearly deprived of his whole fortune. The calamity was the more heavy that it was gradual. Had the loss occurred at once, and so ended, the severity of the effect might have stimulated him to exertions by which he might have retrieved his fortune. But he was embarked in a mass of thorny and inextricable affairs, and forced into association with people every way distasteful to him;—each day presenting some new hope of amendment, or project of escape, which the next destroyed;—till, after the lapse of several miserable years, he found himself

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nearly deprived of all. Meanwhile, the fruitless efforts which he made for deliverance had so wasted his time, health, and spirits, that it was now too late to redeem his affairs by any exertions which remained within his power. In the midst of these distresses he had lost both his children: and his wife, overwhelmed by such a succession of calamities coming on a feeble constitution, soon followed them to the grave.

Mr Aubrey supported his unmerited fate with outward composure, but it left a melancholy on his spirits which never wore away. The narrowness of his fortune contributed, with this frame of mind, to estrange him from general society; but among his friends, he was esteemed not less for his gentle manners, and extensive information, than for his worth and misfortunes. His health had suffered from anxiety of mind; and, for some time past, he had been struck with an internal malady, which, though it did not much affect his outward appearance, or usual habits, he well knew, and did not conceal, would, sooner or later, prove fatal. His death therefore, though not immediately foreseen, could scarcely be called unexpected.

At the funeral of Mr Aubrey, there was none of that deep and overwhelming affliction which attends the loss of a husband or wife,—a parent or child,—snatched from a loving and beloved family. Still less could you perceive the almost ludicrous indifference and homeliness which too often appear in the every-day winding up of the work of the undertaker. There was, on the countenances of all present, a calm regret,

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mingled with reverence, which suited alike the solemnity of the occasion, and the virtues of the deceased. A short prayer was said by the clergyman of his parish ;—a decent and proper improvement on the simplicity of our Scottish ritual, which has been introduced within my remembrance. We then followed the remains of our friend to their last abode, in the churchyard of the Greyfriars, where his wife and children repose. And while we stood around the grave where he was laid by their side, and heard the loose earth rattle on his coffin, and the spades beating on the sod which covered up another friend from the society of the living,—more than one eye was dimmed with tears.

The small wrecks of Mr Aubrey's fortune were divided by his will among his relations. But as he had appointed me one of his executors, I had an opportunity of looking through his papers, wherein I found some things not unworthy of preservation. He had been in the custom of writing down reflections on himself, his affairs, and studies, not in the form of a regular journal, but from time to time, as any subject occurred of sufficient importance. Among other things, I found reflections on the state of his mind, after he felt himself affected, as I have mentioned, with the malady which he knew to be fatal. This is a situation fitted to excite the sympathy of all of us, who know not how soon the case may be our own. It is one commonly esteemed the most trying to human fortitude ; yet, as we may see in this instance, not incapable of being turned to improvement, and even conso-

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lation. The divine alchemy of religion, and patience, that *Sovereign o'er transmuted ill,* can extract a blessing from what, at first sight, appears as the last terror of suffering humanity.

After describing the symptoms of his malady, and stating his conviction that it is mortal and incurable,—my friend goes on as follows:—"These observations "lead me to ask the following question:—Is the situ- "ation in which I find myself to be accounted a misfor- "tune or not? They who are rioting in the assured "hopes of health and long life,—and in all the enjoy- "ments and prospects which these afford,—would "wonder at such a question. Still it is one on which "I am not resolved. I am affected with an ailment, "which reason convinces me must sooner or later "prove fatal. But its period is uncertain, and it oc- "casions no extreme bodily suffering. I have now "lived several years under its pressure; and though "scarce a day passes without reminding me of it, by "some symptom or other;—such is the effect of long "acquaintance, that these cease to give me much "alarm. Alas! has the youngest and most vigorous "any greater assurance for the continuance of life? "How many have I seen pass away, since the begin- "ning of my malady, who would have looked with "horror and compassion on my circumstances. On "the other hand, the habitual impression of such a "silent monitor is not without its use. It has per- "haps kept me from vices or vanities which I might "otherwise have fallen into; and enabled me to form "a juster estimate, both of this life, and of that which

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" is to come. It has turned my thoughts more fre-
" quently towards the close of my present being; and
" lifted them to that Source whence alone can support
" be derived in suffering and in death. I humbly
" trust that it has also made me less unfit for a state
" of higher existence.

" The chief thing to be feared, in such a situation,
" is the discouragement of all exertion in matters
" connected with this world. This I must endeavour
" to guard against. There is, I think, no more ac-
" ceptable service to the Supreme Being, than a dili-
" gent discharge of the duties of this life, and a cul-
" tivation of the faculties which are bestowed upon
" us; leaving proper periods for religious study and
" exercise. Whatever time death may come, it can-
" not find us better prepared than in such engage-
" ments. They are indeed not more laudable than
" prudent. They relieve the mind from that depres-
" sion which even the best would feel from too close a
" contemplation of mortality; and prevent a listlessness
" from creeping on, which would benumb both our fa-
" culties and exertions. Let me, therefore, persevere
" in active, and even strenuous employment. But on
" retiring every night to rest, let it be with the deep
" impression that I may never see another sun."

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## XXXVIII. MODERN MEALS.

Cœna brevis juvat.
Hor.

Among the circumstances which mark the change of manners, and the features of an age, none of the least important is the method in which the serious business of eating and drinking is arranged. The *Symposion* and *Convivium* of the ancients occupied a large share of the attention of their philosophers, as well as of their *bons vivants*. There is something in partaking of our meals together which brings a greater intimacy to conversation,—gives a brisker flow to the spirits,—and inspires a more kindly and social feeling towards one another, than we find in any other mode or occasion of assembling in numbers. And in the peculiar way in which this affair is ordered, may often be traced, not only the progress of manners in any particular society, but the habits and spirit of different nations.

We are told of the Chinese (a people as to whose high pretensions we have now been pretty well disabused), that when a man of rank invites his friends to dinner, the entertainment is placed in bowls, on small detached tables. At each of these, two or three guests are seated;—one of the festive boards being graced by the presence of the landlord himself. Not a word is uttered during the whole ceremony;—and (it may be thought superfluous to add) no women

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are admitted. Every body gobbles up, in silence, his mess of *pilaw*, or *curried fowl*, by the assistance of two little chopsticks; and after they are done, each quits his table; approaches the master of the feast, and makes him a bow, as if to thank him for his good cheer;—and so all take their departure. Should any guest be prevented from coming, his portion is set aside, and sent to him at his own house. A certain friend of mine, who is a great philosopher—and moreover is not insensible to the merits of a good dinner,—observed, on hearing the above account, that nothing more was wanting to satisfy him of the unenlightened and semi-barbarous state of that people. "Not," said he, "that a well-dressed *curry* is to be despised,—particularly when the powder is fresh:—neither would I too hastily condemn the exclusion of females;—for really the little attentions which they exact are importunate, when one is seriously engaged:—But then, such a slovenly unsatisfactory way of eating:—O, sir, depend upon it, they are far behind."

We Europeans have a better notion of things. The importance which we have always attached to the noble occupation of eating and drinking (more lately advanced to its proper rank in the scale of things by the name of the *Gastronomical Science*), is a convincing proof of the high state of humanity and civilization to which we have reached. Those, accordingly, who have been most eminent for their attainments in other branches of human knowledge, have distinguished this by their peculiar attention. It is well known to have been the settled doctrine of the great Samuel Johnson

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(a doctrine duly enforced by his practice), that no wise man thinks so much of any subject as of his dinner. From so pure a source, his principles have descended unimpaired to the learned of the present day; and among the manifold disputes by which they are divided on every branch of art and knowledge, I believe that a just value for their dinner is the only point on which they all agree.

Indeed, in this our British nation, the honour in which Dinner is held is not more than commensurate with the many grave purposes which it is called upon to serve. It is, in fact, through this channel, that our most weighty sentiments and opinions do commonly find a vent, and the greatest objects are achieved. Have we not dinners of Whig, and dinners of Tory? —Dinners of praise, and dinners of censure?—Dinners of triumph, and of humiliation?—of joy, and of sorrow? —Whether we cry out for liberty, or for a strict execution of the laws:—For war or peace:—economy or profusion;—Do we not always proceed by a dinner?— By a dinner we promote a charity,—or reform the constitution,—or laud an M. P., —or bring an actor into vogue,—or propagate the Gospel,—or celebrate a boxing match,—or immortalize a sale of books. Ministers are *dined* out of their places,—and public peculators into a due sense of their enormities.

On casting our eye over European society and manners, for several centuries back, it is somewhat curious to remark the different hours of taking meals, at different times, and among different classes of the people; —the progressive change in these, which has always

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been going forward;—and the importance which is attached, by habit, to punctuality in the exercise of this daily function. Cardinal de Retz tells us, that while in the course of attaining the great object of his ambition,—the character of an accomplished *Chef de parti*,—he was stirring up the Parisians to constant tumults,—his great difficulty was to get them to give up their usual hour of dinner. Nothing was easier than to urge on that light and ferocious populace to burn a few houses, or massacre a score of their innocent townsmen;—but when the hour of dinner arrived, all was at a stand;—off they trooped, and left the reverend *Coadjuteur* to his meditations;—for, said they, "Nous n'aimons pas nous *desheurer*."

The dining hour of our sober ancestors in this island will fill some of their uninformed descendants with surprise. In the glorious days of Queen Elizabeth, it was, among people of fashion, eleven o'clock before noon. The supper was between five and six in the evening. So late as Charles II's time, the hour of dinner, (as appears by Pepys's Diary,) was twelve o'clock. Even when that most amusing and instructive of gossips prepared solemn entertainments (*to his great content*) for his noble friends Lords Sandwich, Peterborough, &c. the hour was still twelve o'clock. The hours of the lower classes of society were, at that time, later than those of their superiors. They dined between twelve and one; and supped at seven. To these hours, indeed, they have continued pretty constant ever since; being determined by necessity and convenience, which are



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steadier guides than fancy and fashion, the rulers of the rich. "Heretofore," says old Harrison, who wrote in the 16th century, "there hath been much more "time spent in eating and drinking than commonly "is in these days: For whereas of old, we had break-"fasts in the forenoon, beverages or nuntions after "dinner, and thereto rare suppers, generally when it was "time to go to rest: Now these odd repasts, (thanked "be God) are very well left; and each one, in manner, "(except here and there some young hungry stomach, "that cannot fast till dinner time) contenteth himself "with dinner and supper only. The nobility, gentle-"men, and merchantmen, especially at great meetings, "do sit commonly till two or three of the clock at after-"noon; so that with many is an hard matter to rise "from the table, to go to evening prayer, and return "from thence, to come time enough to supper."

If the times before these were more extravagant in eating and drinking; and spent more of the day in such recreations, than their immediate descendants; truly these latter do not seem to have possessed habits very spare or ascetic, if we may judge from a bill of fare which Gervase Markham (the Apicius of those days) gives us, in his *English Housewife*. This worthy *Restaurateur*, after discussing the methods of *ordering great feasts*, gives directions for "a more "humble feast, or an ordinary proportion, which any "good man may keep in his family, for the entertain-"ment of his true and worthy friend."—This *humble feast* consists, in the first course, of "*sixteen* full "dishes, that is, dishes of meat that are of substance,

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" and not empty, or for show: as thus, for example;
" 1*st*, A shield of brawn; 2*dly*, A boiled capon; 3*dly*,
" A boiled piece of beef; 4*thly*, A chine of beef roasted;
" 5*thly*, A neat's tongue roasted; 6*thly*, A pig roasted;
" 7*thly*, Chewets baked; 8*thly*, A goose roasted; 9*thly*,
" A swan roasted; 10*thly*, A turkey roasted; the 11*th*,
" A haunch of venison roasted; the 12*th*, A pasty of
" venison; the 13th, A kid, with a pudding in the
" belly; the 14*th*, An olive-pye; the 15*th*, A couple
" of capons; the 16*th*, A custard or dowsets. Now,
" to these full dishes may be added sallads, fricasees,
" *quelque choses*, and devised pastes, as many dishes
" more, which make the full service no less than *two*
" *and thirty dishes*, which is as much as can conve-
" niently stand on one table, and in one mess. And
" after this manner, you may proportion both your
" second and third course, holding fulness on one half
" of the dishes, and show on the other, which will be
" both frugal in the spender, contentment to the guest,
" and much pleasure and delight to the beholders."

If our ancestors ate at this rate in their *humble feasts*, it is no wonder that they excelled us, their puny and degenerate offspring. I would not fear to propose the above bill of fare as a study for all the *Almanacs des Gourmands*, with their disciples in theory and practice, throughout Europe. However they may surpass our rude forefathers in the depths of gastronomical science, and the resources of the culinary art, they will not easily cover a table with greater variety or abundance of substantial fare.

In the days of good Queen Anne, the dining hour,



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among polite company, was from two to three o'clock; and the fashionable time for paying visits was after dinner. Swift complains of the lateness of his ministerial friends, Harley and St John, not dining till four. I am old enough to remember, when the common hour of dinner, among private families, in our good City of Edinburgh, was two o'clock,—then three,—afterwards four,—and now five. In the metropolis of England, we all know that the present hour of solemn dinners, among the great world, varies from eight to nine: while, in this phenix of the north, if you are bid forth on ceremony, you cannot hope to taste a morsel till near seven.

When dinner was served at two or three, tea was a regular meal at six, and supper at nine. The progressive lateness of dining has driven this last cheerful and social meal from the earth; and I own that I cannot but give a sigh to its memory. It afforded a pleasant occasion of assembling the family, and concluding the day;—with the addition, now and then, of a few intimate friends. This has given place, in mixed society, to unmeaning uncomfortable crowds; and even in domestic life, the very lateness of the principal meal prevents all thoughts of sitting down regularly to another.

In spite of the tyranny of times and fashions, I so far cling to my ancient predilections, as to bring a few friends together, now and then, at an old-fashioned supper;—giving them due warning, that they may regulate the day's diet according to the primitive hours of our fathers. At my table, they enjoy the luxuries

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of an undisturbed seat,—room to square their elbows, —a roast fowl,—and a sober glass after it;—which we drink off to good fellowship, and the revival of ancient manners.

Whether my known partialities on this subject have procured me the following address, I know not; but I give it exactly as it came to my hands.

"UNTO the Most HONOURABLE and WORSHIPFUL the KEEPER OF THE CABINET,—The humble PETITION of your afflicted servant SUPPER;

"SHEWETH,

"THAT your petitioner is descended of an ancient family, and was held in great honour and esteem by the politest nations of antiquity, as can be proved from divers authors of credit.

"That such was the respect paid to your petitioner by the aforesaid ancients, that they always appeared before him in a prostrate or recumbent attitude, and never presumed to stand erect in his presence.

"That among them your petitioner was always found in company with Wit and Learning, Hospitality and Good Cheer, and was considered as a cherisher and supporter of these his associates.

"That, in more modern times, your petitioner, though treated with less distinction, was still justly valued for his success in promoting conversation, hilarity, good manners, and social feelings; till within these few years last past, that a person called DINNER (claiming kindred with your petitioner, though of a younger branch) hath presumed to invade the prerogatives, and intrude himself into the whole rights and place of your petitioner;—contrary to law and

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justice, and to the great hurt, damage, and vilification of your petitioner.

"That, your petitioner's rights have been further invaded by a certain base-born interloper, called LUNCH, who hath ascended from the servants' hall to the drawing-room; —and whose very name is enough to banish him from all polite society.

"That, for want of your petitioner's assistance, there is no longer any proper mode of concluding the evening. For whereas, in large assemblies, nothing can be seen but crowding, elbowing, scrambling, and snatching, to the great offence of good manners;—so, in smaller meetings, or family parties, individuals are forced to straggle and lounge about the drawing-room, not knowing what to do;—to play at cards,—turn over prints,—doze at the fire-side,—yawn round a *piano forte*,—the very emblems of listlessness and *ennui*,—till they severally sneak off to bed.—And if, on any occasion, your petitioner be called in, he is shorn of his ancient honours and appurtenances, and reduced to a mere shadow of himself,—being stinted in seats, servants, food, and liquor.

"That while your petitioner is chiefly attentive (as befitteth) to his own grievances, he cannot avoid putting in a word in behalf of a respectable kinswoman of his, called TEA, who hath equally suffered from the usurpations aforesaid. That your petitioner's said kinswoman is a spinster of unblemished reputation, and was formerly visited by the best company. That she was famous for promoting conversation, and a wholesome review of characters,—eminently favourable to the cause of virtue. But of late she is not allowed to appear in any drawing-room with proper respect and solemnity,—being merely hustled in by a couple of lacqueys, and straightway removed, as if the company were ashamed of her presence.

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"All which grievances aforesaid are humbly submitted to your HONOUR, hoping for such relief in the premises as to your great wisdom may seem meet.

"And your petitioner, (for self and cousin), will ever pray, &c."

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## XXXIX. THEORY OF MIXED WIT.

Neque id statim legenti persuasum sit, omnia quæ magni auctores dixerint utique esse perfecta:—cum Ciceroni dormitare interim Demosthenes; Horatio vero etiam Homerus ipse videatur.—Modestè tamen, et circumspecto judicio, de tantis viris pronuntiandum est.
QUINTIL.

No one has entered on the task of periodical instruction without paying a just tribute to the genius of Addison, who may be regarded as the father and the model of this way of writing. It was indeed happy for himself, and for the world, that he discovered where his talent lay; and, instead of persevering in tragic poetry, for which he was unfit, turned his labours to a branch of letters, where he was destined to become one of the most useful and delightful teachers of mankind. His sound sense,—his cheerful benevolence,—his rational piety,—his knowledge of the world, and habits of good society,—his copious invention,—his delicate humour,—his moral imagination,—the soft graces of his style,—all these united towards his success in this form of composition;—and

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were given to him in such quality and measure, as perhaps would scarcely have raised him high in any other.

In particular, this amiable author was not so remarkable for a penetrating intellect, as for the elegance of his taste and fancy. His two performances which required the greatest reach of thought, the *Essays on Wit*, and on the *Pleasures of Imagination*, are certainly more estimable for the beauties of their style and illustration, than either for profound discovery, or for a clear and elementary exposition of the principles belonging to either subject. These principles, and the faculties of the mind connected with them, have been unfolded by others with far greater skill; but have never been traced through their ordinary applications with more felicity or grace. It is with the former of these works only, the *Essays on Wit*, that I am at present concerned; and, in touching on the errors of such an author, I trust I shall never be thought deficient in that respect which his merits, of a different kind, so eminently deserve.

The *Essays on Wit*, it is well known, are chiefly employed in showing the various forms under which *False Wit* has prevailed in the world. The definition of *True Wit* our author has borrowed from Locke, who holds it to consist in the tracing of some unexpected relation (generally that of resemblance or contrariety), between objects or ideas apparently unconnected. And as *True Wit* is the tracing of such relation between things or ideas;—*False Wit* is the

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tracing of it between words, letters, or the mere form and shape of the writing.

After distinguishing between these, and illustrating each, our author goes on to mention a third variety, half way betwixt the two, which he terms *Mixed Wit.* This discovery, if well established, would be the most original part of the discourse; but it seems to me that he has fallen into some confusion in his notions on this subject; and as the errors of such an author are of importance, I hope my readers will give me a little of their patience while I endeavour to unfold and correct them.

This theory of *Mixed Wit* is set forth as follows. "As *True Wit* consists in the resemblance of *Ideas*, "and *False Wit* in the resemblance of *Words*, ac- "cording to the foregoing instances; there is an- "other kind of wit which consists partly in the re- "semblance of *Ideas*, and partly in the resemblance "of *Words*, which, for distinction's sake, I shall call "*Mixed Wit*. This kind of wit is that which abounds "in Cowley more than in any author that ever wrote." And he afterwards produces from Cowley several instances of it. "The passion of love in its nature has "been thought to resemble fire; for which reason the "words *fire* and *flame* are made use of to signify "*love*. The witty poets therefore have taken an ad- "vantage, from the doubtful meaning of the word "*fire*, to make an infinite number of witticisms. "Cowley observing the cold regard of his mistress's "eyes,—and at the same time their power of produ- "cing love in him,—considers them as burning

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"glasses made of ice; and finding himself able to "live in the greatest extremities of love, concludes "the Torrid Zone to be habitable. Upon the dying "of a tree on which he had cut his loves, he observes "that his written flames had burned up and withered "the tree. His endeavouring to drown his love in "wine is throwing oil on the fire," &c.

The conclusion drawn from these instances is as follows. "The reader may observe in every one of "these instances that the poet mixes the qualities of "*fire* with those of *love;* and, in the same sentence, "speaking of it both as a passion and as real fire, sur-"prises the reader with those seeming resemblances "or contradictions that make up all the wit in this "kind of writing. *Mixed Wit*, therefore, is a com-"position of *Pun* and *True Wit;* and is more or "less perfect as the resemblance lies in the ideas, or "in the words. Its foundations are laid partly in "falsehood, and partly in truth. Reason puts in "her claim for one half of it, and Extravagance for "the other." *

That there may exist such a thing as *mixed wit*, according to the foregoing definition of it,—that is, wit consisting partly in the resemblance of thought and partly in the resemblance of words,—I am far from disputing. But I conceive that the above are not examples of it; and that the fault which runs through them all,—and which takes from them the character of genuine wit,—is of a wholly different kind.

In the first place, there is not in these instances

* Spectator, No. 62.

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any resemblance or ambiguity of *words* whatever: and to apply our author's own test for detecting verbal quibbles,—that of translation into another language,—the above examples would suffer nothing by that operation. For instance: "Nomen puellæ meæ "cortice inscripsi: flammæ autem scriptæ arborem "cremaverunt." Or of another: "Amorem vino "submergere est velut igni oleum injicere." Or to try them in a different language: "J'ai inscrit ma pas- "sion sur l'ecorce, mais les flammes gravées ont brulé "et fletri l'arbre."—"Vouloir noyer l'amour dans le "vin, c'est mettre de l'huile sur le feu." In these translations the whole sense is preserved; nor do I know any language where it would be lost. Were we even to suppose a people who did not use or comprehend the metaphor, still, if their language had words to express *love* and *fire*, the translation would be perfect, and would be understood by foreigners acquainted with that tongue. Whereas, in all cases where the wit lies in a resemblance of words, or pun, not only those cannot perceive it, into whose language it is translated, but strangers who know both languages see at once that the quibble perishes in the translation. Thus,—to take an example from high authority,—one of Milton's rebellious angels says of their cannon-balls,

> Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight;
> ——————— Who receives them right,
> Had need, from head to foot, well *understand*.

If this last word be rendered by the Latin *intelligere*, or the French *entendre*, every one who knows both

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languages must see that the quibble, or double sense, is gone. No similar effect takes place in the instances before quoted as mixed wit.

There is another quibble, destined to a still more important end, which I am tempted to cite. I mean that by which Ulysses, in the Odyssey, outwits the giant Cyclops. He declares his name to be 'ΟΥΤΙΣ, which signifies *nobody*;—so that when the monster's brethren come, and ask who had hurt him, he answers 'ΟΥΤΙΣ; —whereupon they reply that, as nobody has hurt him, they can do him no good;—and so stalk away. The method which Pope takes to preserve this conceit, is to give up the proper name of OUTIS, and substitute an analogous quibble, in our tongue, by calling him NOMAN: and accordingly, on Polyphemus's answer, the brother Cyclops rejoin,—"If NO MAN hurt thee, but the hand divine," &c. Cowper, I think with less judgment, adheres, in his translation, to the name of OUTIS; and thus leaves the idea, such as it is, wholly unintelligible.

This, indeed, is the only exception to the test of translation, proposed by our author for the detection of a quibble. It will not apply where the new language admits of a corresponding ambiguity. Thus Petrarch's many conceits on the resemblance betwixt his mistress's name and the laurel, would hold in Latin and French,—and nearly in English,—as in Italian:—but a Greek poet, who was ambitious of a similar beauty, would have to call his fair one *Daphne*.

The instances selected from Cowley as mixed wit,

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however, require no shifting of language to preserve their whole sense; but remain unchanged under the most simple and literal translation. The wit, therefore, consists wholly in the thought: but we shall be more sensible of this, if we examine what the nature of that thought is. In order to this, it will be necessary to premise some distinctions which lead to a more exact idea of the nature of wit. These it is rather too late to begin upon after so long an introduction: they must therefore be reserved till next paper.

In the mean time, I may remark, that, as far as I know, there is no other language which has a word to express what is meant by the English term *Wit*, in the peculiar and technical sense of Locke's definition; —and, what is singular, among the many loose and popular meanings of the word given in Johnson's Dictionary, this its more strict and proper signification is not distinctly noticed. There are no doubt terms, in most languages, to express ludicrous or comic writing in general. The French word *Esprit*, and the Italian *Ingegno*, seem to have a meaning somewhat more precise; but I am not aware of any language which could express, by translation, the exact import of the simple title of Addison's performance, *An Essay on Wit*. Assuredly Helvetius's treatise *De l'Esprit* has a very different meaning. A sturdy Englishman would account for this by saying, that as no other nation ever had so much of the *thing*,—so it is less wonderful that they should want a *word* to express it. And truly, though the genius of Moliere and Voltaire may stand up, with some show of oppo-

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sition, on the other side; yet in the strict and peculiar quality of *Wit*, properly so called, I do not know any literature which can produce an equipollent to the names of Shakspeare, Cowley, Butler, Swift, and Congreve.

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## XL. THEORY OF MIXED WIT.

> Ut apertius hoc sit, exemplis licet vim rei, qualis et quanta sit, cognoscamus.
>
> Cic.

Wit, as mentioned in my last paper, may be defined the tracing of some relation (generally that of *Resemblance* or *Contrariety*) between objects apparently unconnected. This relation must exist between the qualities or attributes of the objects compared; and the greater the apparent dissimilarity, and the more numerous and close the points of coincidence, the finer will be the wit. Now the qualities of objects, in our present view of them, are either *Literal* or *Figurative*: whence arises a threefold distinction in the resemblance which may be traced between them. 1*st*, A resemblance may be traced between the *literal* qualities of one object, and the *literal* qualities of another. 2*dly*, Between the *literal* qualities of one object, and the *figurative* qualities of another; and, 3*dly*, Between the *figurative* qualities of one object, and the *figurative* qualities of another.

1*st*, Wit may arise from the tracing a resemblance

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between the *literal* qualities of two objects; as in the well known simile in Hudibras:—

> But now the sun long since his nap
> Had taken out in Thetis' lap,
> And, like a lobster boiled, the morn
> From black to red began to turn.

Here the qualities of resemblance, the colours of black and red, are applied in a literal sense to both objects, the *lobster* and the *morning*. When Falstaff addresses his page—"Now, do I here walk before thee, like a sow that hath overwhelmed all her litter, save one;"—or when he says of Prince Hal—"O you shall see him laugh till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up;"—the qualities of resemblance are literally applied to both objects compared. The same may be said of Congreve's illustration of the argument of two drunk men across a table—"They could neither of them speak for rage; and so fell a sputtering at one another, like two roasting apples:"—or of the country Baronet's improvement by travel—"No doubt you will return very much improved." "Yes," says another, aside, "like a Dutch skipper from the Whale Fishery."—Here the quality of *improvement* is applied literally, though ironically, to both.

*2dly*, Wit may be produced by tracing a resemblance between the *literal* qualities of one object, and the *figurative* or *metaphorical* qualities of another; and this, I think, is the form under which it occurs most frequently, and perhaps in the highest perfection; as there is here an additional element of unexpected resemblance, in the figurative nature of one of

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the objects compared, which has its own literal prototype. Thus in the following couplet of Dryden:—

> We chiefly by example sinned before,
> And, glass-like, clearness mixed with frailty bore.

The qualities of *clearness* and *frailty* are applied literally to glass, and figuratively to mankind. So in Swift's lines in a Lady's Ivory Table-book;

> Peruse my leaves through every part,
> And think thou read'st my owner's heart;
> Scrawl'd o'er with trifles thus, and quite
> As hard, as senseless, and as light.

Here the qualities of *hardness*, *insensibility*, and *levity*, are applied literally to the leaves, and figuratively to the heart. The same author says of Wisdom, in the Tale of a Tub:—"Wisdom is a fox, who, "after long hunting, will at last cost you the pains to "dig out:—it is a cheese, which, by how much the "richer, has the thicker, the homelier, and the coarser "coat; and whereof, to a judicious palate, the maggots are the best:—it is a sack-posset, wherein the "deeper you go, you will find it the sweeter:—Wisdom is a hen, whose cackling we must value and "consider, because it is attended with an egg;—but "then, lastly, it is a nut, which, unless you chuse "with judgment, may cost you a tooth, and pay "you with nothing but a worm." Here the common qualities are taken literally as to the one object, and figuratively as to the other. The same double application appears in Pope's illustration of the temptations of a court;



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Court virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate,
Born where Heaven's influence scarce can penetrate.

Denham's famous comparison of the beauty of verse to the qualities of a river, is of the same kind;

Though deep yet clear, though gentle yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

Of this couplet Johnson observes, in his Life of Denham, "That if there be any language which does not "express intellectual operations by material images, "into that language these verses cannot be translated." This is just the error to which I alluded in my last paper. These verses may be translated into any language which has terms to express *deep, clear*, &c. If the natives "*have never expressed intellectual ope-* "*rations by material images*," they may be so dull as not to comprehend the metaphor; but this would not make the translation less perfect. Johnson's observation would indeed equally apply to all the instances cited by Addison as *mixed wit;* and the same answer might be made in all. In this respect they agree with the above passage of Denham. The distinction between them I shall afterwards point out.

To draw one or two more examples of this kind of wit from the rich mine of Congreve:—"Thou art a "retailer of phrases; and dost deal in the remnants "of remnants, like a maker of pincushions."—Or this other, "Witwould grows by the knight, like a medlar "grafted on a crab; one will melt in your mouth, and "t'other set your teeth on edge;—one is all pulp, the



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" other all core." Or the expression used by Cibber, as to the fine lady in a passion, in the Careless Husband, " O! you shall see, I will sweeten her, and she will " cool like a dish of tea." Or, lastly, to take the example proposed by Addison himself as an instance of Wit. " When a poet tells us that the bosom of his " mistress *is as white as snow*, there is no wit in the " comparison; but when he adds, with a sigh, that " it *is as cold too*, then it grows into wit." In all these cases the quality is applied literally to one of the objects compared, and metaphorically to the other.

*3dly*, Wit may arise from a resemblance traced between the *figurative* qualities of one object and the *figurative* qualities of another. Thus in the beautiful Ode of David to his mistress, in the *Davideis* of Cowley, he thus addresses his lyre:—

Awake! awake! my lyre!
And tell thy silent master's humble tale,
In sounds that may prevail,
Sounds that gentle thoughts inspire:
Though so exalted she,
And I so lowly be,
Tell her such different notes make all thy harmony.

Here the height of worldly condition is assimilated to height in the scale of music;—both being drawn, by a figure, from the same relation in physical nature. So also, when Horace Walpole says of Lord Somers, —" He was one of those divine men, who, like a " chapel in a palace, remains unpolluted, while all " around is tyranny, corruption, and folly;"—the quality of *purity* is applied metaphorically to both objects compared.

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The above distinctions will enable us to discover the nature and defects of the instances cited by our author as mixed wit. These are, one and all, examples of wit under the *second* of the heads just enumerated; —wherein a resemblance is traced between the *literal* qualities of one object, and the *metaphorical* qualities of another. The literal quality of *Fire* is that of burning. This quality, by an easy metaphor, is applied to Love. And all the wit of the above passages (so far as it is pure) lies in likening the fate of the lover consumed by his passion, to a tree burned by a hot iron,—to the Torrid Zone scorched by the sun,—to a fire inflamed by oil, &c.—The two subjects of comparison are assimilated by the common quality of *burning*, applied literally to the one, and figuratively to the other;—just as, in the couplet of Denham, the poem and the stream are assimilated by the common qualities of depth, clearness, gentleness, &c. or in that of Pope, virtue in a court is compared to a diamond in the mine, by the common quality of exclusion from the beams of Heaven.

But the passages cited by Addison as examples of Mixed Wit (it will be replied) are certainly not of the same pure and genuine kind as those to which they have just been compared. This I allow; and the defect lies simply here, that the metaphor, though in itself just, is destroyed by being applied literally. A metaphor pleases the mind by implying a resemblance or analogy between two objects, in one or more of their qualities;—but, in as far as you take any of those qualities in a figurative sense, you must



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adhere to that sense throughout. You must give the *figurative* quality only *figurative* work to do. The moment a *figurative* quality is applied *literally*, so as to produce physical and material effects,—the illusion vanishes, and the mind revolts at an incongruity which violates the laws of nature. This may be explained, by showing how the instances quoted by our author might, by a slight change, be corrected;—and the perfect ones to which I have compared them, be rendered faulty.

If Cowley had said, "That while he carved his "mistress's name on the tree, with a hot iron, Cupid's "glowing shaft wrote it as deeply in his heart:"—Or "That the flames of love scorched his bosom as the "sun burnt up the torrid zone;"—the literal and figurative senses would have been kept distinct;—each would have produced its proper effects;—and the thought would have remained unexceptionable. But when he ascribes to the figurative and immaterial fires of love the physical effect of burning wood, or inflaming the atmosphere;—the metaphor is broken,—the illusion vanishes,—and we are shocked with an incongruity which contradicts our feelings and senses.

Some may allege that the corrections just hinted at, so far from improving the wit of Cowley, rather take away from its energy and point. This may be true, without affecting the justness of my objection. The analogy between *love* and *fire* is so trite and obvious, as scarcely to give room for that unexpectedness of resemblance which constitutes wit, while the me-

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taphor is kept distinct. When the figure is applied literally, the conceit has something more of novelty; and, in so far, more of the ingredients of wit, notwithstanding the inaccurate application; and this was evidently the temptation which misled Cowley so often into this way of writing. To liken the influence of love on the heart to a hot iron on a tree, is so plain an analogy as to excite little surprise; but when the flames of love are said to scorch the solid wood, the thought has something more uncommon, and gives pleasure to those whose taste is not just enough to be offended by the disturbance of the metaphor.

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## XLI. THEORY OF MIXED WIT.

In tenui labor.
VIRG.

IN my last paper I endeavoured to show that the fault of that peculiar turn of thought which Addison denominates *Mixed Wit*, lies in no quibble or ambiguity of words, but in the application of a metaphor in a literal sense,—under that form of resemblance which is traced between the literal qualities of one object and the metaphorical qualities of another. This I illustrated by pointing out how the instances in question might be amended by adjusting the metaphor. I shall now proceed to shew that the passages which I quoted as examples of genuine wit, under the second branch, may be rendered faulty by a simi-

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lar change in the thought; that is, by taking the metaphor from its proper figurative sense, and applying it literally to the object from which it is drawn.

Thus Pope likens the virtues of a court, buried under many temptations, to diamonds in a mine, excluded from the influence of heaven; and, in pursuing the figure, he might have represented himself as a skilful pioneer, endeavouring to remove the incumbent mass, and bring those moral gems to light. But if he had proposed that a party of miners should be sent to St James's, with real pick-axes and shovels, to dig out those hidden excellencies,—the thought would have had the very same fault as those of Cowley. In the same manner, Swift compares the searching for wisdom to cracking a nut;—in the one case, if you choose a bad nut, you may break a tooth, and find no kernel;—in the other, if you follow a wrong guide, you may study hard, and get little improvement. Here the figure is correct, and the thought unexceptionable. But if you were to say of a crabbed author, that you had broken a tooth in chewing his rough style;—or of a cold dull one, that you shivered as you turned the pages;—or, in applying Denham's similitude, if you said that, in reading a poem, you found it so shallow as scarcely to wet your shoes;—or so impetuous, as to sweep you off your chair;—in all those cases you would be guilty of the same falseness of thought which Addison has denominated mixed wit. Or to take, as formerly, that author's own example of genuine wit;—a lover may compare his mistress's bosom to snow, and be allowed to freeze under it meta-

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phorically as long as he thinks fit; but if he should aver that the thermometer actually sunk at her approach, he would commit the very fault which we have been considering. Accordingly our author himself, while he adduces this image, in the *metaphorical* sense, as an example of true wit; gives, in his concluding Allegory, as a personification of *mixed wit*, women with bosoms of *real snow*.

Various instances of the same error in composition, both serious and ludicrous, are familiar to every one. It is this which constitutes the blemish in Gray's allusion to Milton, in the Ode on the Progress of Poesy;

> The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
> Where angels tremble as they gaze,
> He saw;—but blasted with excess of light,
> Closed his eyes in endless night.

Even so correct a writer as Boileau (whom Addison declares incapable of such false taste as this,) has not escaped something of the same error, in the following allusion, in his Eleventh Satire:—

> Sois dévot, elle dit; Sois doux, simple, équitable;
> Car, d'un Dévot souvent au Chrétien véritable,
> La distance est deux fois plus longue, à mon avis,
> Que du pôle Antartique au Détroit de Davis.

Or as Addison has himself expressed nearly the same thought, in the Letter of the King of Bantam's Ambassador, in the Spectator, "The people where I now "am have tongues further from their hearts than from "London to Bantam."—"Man, woman, and child," says old *Decker* in his *Gull's Hornbook*, "wear "their hair longer than a lawsuit."

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Of burlesque examples of the same turn of thought there are abundance. Touchstone, the Fool, in *As You Like it*, says, "He never will find his wit stand "in his way, till he breaks his shins against it."—A gallant hackney coachman is said to have asked a lady's permission to light his pipe at her eyes:—And the lover in the Irish song declares, "His passion's so "fierce that it burns through his clothes." I think it was in the same taste, that the ancient philosopher wished to have a window in his breast, that all might read his thoughts.

From all this I conclude, that the blemish in those instances termed by our author *Mixed Wit*, lies wholly in the thought, and not at all in the words;—that there is, of consequence, no mixture of pun in it, as he alleges;—and that the fault consists simply in the metaphor being applied in a literal sense.

But although our author appears to have been mistaken, in regard to the defect in the instances alluded to, and in citing them as examples of *Mixed Wit*;—there may nevertheless be such a thing as *Mixed Wit*, according to his definition of it,—that is, "Wit which "consists partly in the resemblance of ideas, and partly "in resemblance of words; and consequently a com-"position of pun and true wit."—There is an example of this in the familiar description of Prince Eugene, "That he was a great *taker* of snuff and towns." Part of the wit here lies in the thought;—in bringing together two ideas so little connected, in a similar relation to the prince;—part in the word *take*, which has, in our tongue, a common application to the con-

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quest of cities, and the using of snuff. Had the expression been that the prince *was fond of snuff and fighting*, all the wit that lies in the thought would have remained, and would have born translation into any language:—but the additional connection arising from the equivocal use of the word *take*, being merely a pun, would be lost in a language where the corresponding word did not admit of the same double application.

A similar use of the same word occurs in Cibber's comedy of the Careless Husband—"Sincerity in love "is as much out of fashion as sweet-snuff;—nobody "*takes* it now."—All the wit that lies in the thought here is in the first clause of the sentence; and the resemblance there traced would remain in any other language. Or if, instead of the word *takes*, the phrase had been, "Nobody *likes* it now,"—this would merely have carried on the metaphor, and would have equally stood translation. The additional point conveyed in the word *takes*, could only be preserved in a language where it has the same double sense.

To the same purpose Pope,

> Here thou great Anna, whom three realms obey,
> Dost sometimes counsel *take*, and sometimes tea.

And Horace Walpole, in one of his letters, speaking of the illness of a lady of quality, says, "She was very "much frightened, and *took* prayers." The same play on a different word is used by Hudibras,

> Will you employ your conquering sword,
> To *break* a fiddle, and your word?

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And by Addison in the proceedings of the *Court of Honour* in the Tatler—"Dathan a peddling Jew, "and T. R. a Welshman, were indicted, by the "keeper of an alehouse in Westminster, for *breaking* "the peace, and two earthen mugs, in a dispute about "the antiquity of their families."

In all these instances the wit lies partly in bringing together dissimilar ideas,—and partly in expressing their connection still more strongly by a single word, —which the use of our language applies, in a double sense, to both of the objects assimilated. They are therefore examples of *Mixed Wit*, according to our author's definition of it. There are instances in serious composition of an error somewhat similar, where, from a love of point, incongruous ideas are associated in producing one effect. Thus Tacitus, in describing the boundaries of Germany, says, "A Gallis, Rætisque, "et Pannoniis, Rheno et Danubio, fluminibus; a Sar- "matis, Dacisque, *mutuo metu aut montibus* separa- "tur." Although this conceit is not properly a pun, being translatable,—the union of *metus* and *montes* somewhat resembles the above instance of Prince Eugene.

But although the verbal ambiguity in the instances above quoted be merely a pun, and incapable of translation, except by a corresponding idiom; no one can fail to perceive how much the *equivoque* adds to the point and happiness of the wit. This tempts me to say a word in behalf of those *Minims of Nature* called *Puns;* who, though now a despised and persecuted generation, were, as we have seen, honoured with the notice of two of the greatest of poets, Homer and Mil-

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ton; and are well known to have enjoyed the special favour and protection of our British Solomon, King James I. They have this peculiar merit, that they are estimable, whether very good or very bad;—but, like poetry, are abhorrent of a medium.

The essence and excellence of a *Pun* consist in the very same thing which constitutes genuine wit, namely in the felicity of tracing a remote resemblance; and this, when carried to perfection even among words, may be preferable to a piece of legitimate wit, where the same thing is less happily accomplished as to thoughts. It is true that puns differ from the Episcopal character, in their incapacity of surviving a *translation:* but they may nevertheless delight their own loving countrymen, and all judicious strangers who will take the trouble to learn their language.

A *Pun* may be defined generally, the tracing of an unexpected resemblance among words, as true wit is, among thoughts. But words have two different properties, each of which may be a source of resemblance between them;—namely, their *meaning*, and their *external form*, and *sound*. One class of resemblances, therefore, is between the different meanings of the same word; the other is between the external form or sound of different words. The former, therefore, lies in the thought, and speaks to the mind:—The latter lies in the letters, and speaks to the eye or ear.

As to the first and more noble class, which lies in tracing a connexion between the different senses borne by one word, I think a penetrating critic might find an exact analogy between this and the several classes of resemblance formerly traced in pure wit:—that is,—

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the ambiguous meanings belonging to the same word may be both *literal*,—one *literal* and one *figurative*,—or both *figurative*;—and it would not be difficult to produce examples of each. But as I can hardly expect attention to such curious ramifications, in this heedless and impatient age, I shall content myself with a single example. When the Comedy of the *Tartuffe* was stopped, through the influence of the President of the Parliament of Paris, who was supposed to be glanced at in that amiable character, Moliere delivered his apology to the audience in these words;—"Mesdames "et Messieurs, on a défendu le Tartuffe. Monsieur le "Premier Président ne veut pas *qu'on le joue.*" The equivoque lay here in both the concluding words;—the two meanings of the first being literal;—those of the second being one literal, and the other metaphorical. *Le* is applicable literally either to the president, or the character in the play: *jouer*, either literally to the performance of a play, or metaphorically to the exposure of an individual. And although the above turn of words be no better than an arrant pun, and incapable of translation into any language which does not bear the same double application (our own for instance); yet I appeal to my readers if its felicity be not such as to give it the preference over much sterling translatable wit. It is truly an exquisite play of thought comprehended in a play of words.

The second species of *Pun* is of a less noble nature, being the mere resemblance of two different words in the sound and collocation of letters, while they differ in sense. This is exemplified in the well known epigram —

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I cannot stand, nor go, the beggar cries,
Nor sit, nor run;—if he says true, he *lyes*.

The same appears in a learned tongue, in Swift's application of a line of Virgil to a Cremona fiddle swept over by a lady's mantua,

*Mantua* væ miseræ nimium vicina *Cremonæ!*

In these instances, two words, wholly different in sense, are assimilated merely by a resemblance in sound and spelling.

To the same family belongs the mistake of the honest Cookmaid, in Moliere's comedy of the *Femmes Savantes*, when reproached by her lady with offences against *Grammaire*,

Qui parle d'offenser *Grand'mere*, ni Grandpere.

As also Burke's application of the line of Horace, to John Wilkes, when borne on the shoulders of the mob,

—— Numerisque fertur
Lege solutis—

And his suggestion to Boswell of a motto for his Tour through the Isle of Man;—

The proper study of Mankind is *Man*.

The last and latest which I shall quote is that made on the empty Chariot intended for the statue of Bonaparte, which was attached to the celebrated Venetian Horses, on the Triumphal Arch in the Place de Carrousel,—*Le Char l'attend*,—which slid very neatly into *Le Charlatan*.

I may observe, in concluding, that there are many

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happy turns of expression, which cannot be denominated puns, and are yet lost by rendering into another language; unless in the same way that a pun admits of, namely, by some analogous phrase. There are several instances of this in Pope's Essay on Criticism, where he censures and exemplifies trite and feeble rhymes, &c.;—but I will only cite the following lines of Boileau, when describing the difficulties of composing rhyme:—

> Souvent j'ai beau rêver du matin jusqu' au soir,
> Quand je veux dire *blanc*, la quinteuse dit *noir;*
> Si je veux d'un galant dépeindre la figure,
> Ma plume, pour rimer, trouve *L'Abbé de Pure;*
> Si je pense exprimer un auteur sans défaut,
> La raison dit *Virgile*, et la rime *Quinault.*

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## XLII. THE FAMILY PICTURE.

> Animam pictura pascit inani.
> VIRG.

IT is a subject of frequent regret, but no easy remedy, that the genius of our modern Artists is wasted in portrait painting, to the exclusion of those loftier designs and studies which might enable them one day to emulate the glory of the ancient schools. Raphael and Titian, no doubt, painted portraits of several of the most eminent men of their times; but no one can regret, as a misapplication even of their powers, the labour which gave to after ages the features of a Charles, a Francis, or a Leo. We are at once

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delighted and improved by contemplating the outward form of those who have exalted our species, long after they have disappeared from this earth :—we love to trace, in such enduring records, " How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree ;"—and in gazing on their external figure, we feel a fresh enthusiasm grow within us to emulate their genius and virtues. But when artists descend from this to the daily drudgery of copying nameless insipid countenances ;—the spruce gentlemen, and rosy burghers, and stall-fed doctors of our land ; with their wives and children ;—we cannot but lament a waste of talent and labour, which, if turned to better account, might have reached the highest honours of the art. When we see the powers of a Reynolds so misapplied, during a long and busy life ; we think what a loss would have been suffered by mankind, had his illustrious predecessors sacrificed to such objects their claims to immortality.

Among the many benefits, however, which the diffusion of wealth and liberty has produced throughout our land, its influence on the Arts has been less favourable. It is when the wealth of a State is chiefly centred in a few hands ;—or when the community is so small that every individual feels a personal share in the common glory ;—that the Arts receive the noblest encouragement, and accomplish the greatest undertakings. Hence, they have thriven most vigorously in the comparatively absolute governments of continental Europe, where the Prince, or nobles, or churchmen, possessed the means, and could enjoy the honours, of patrons ;—or in the small Re-

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public of ancient Athens, where every citizen took his chief pride and glory in that of the State. Under such incentives, the noblest monuments in painting, sculpture, and architecture, have been completed. But with us in Britain the Monarch possesses no such command of the national resources as to enable him to promote undertakings so costly; while the community is too large to feel that intimate sense of the public honour which inspired the Athenians; and inclined them to postpone the gratification of personal vanity, to the advancement of national glory. In addition to this, objectors may whisper that our Arctic sun fails to kindle within us that genius for the arts which is lighted up in the warmer bosoms of the South. But, whatever be the cause, the fact is certain, that, among us, private comfort carries it over public splendour: and, while no country in the world can show so many commodious dwellings, and comfortable families, there is none of equal wealth and civility which is less distinguished by public monuments of native art. The same diffusion of wealth which supplies so many with the good things of life, enables almost all to have their picture drawn; and, satisfied with this, few think of giving their money towards the general improvement of the art.

Sir Joshua Reynolds might, no doubt, have resisted this swarm of intruding subjects for his pencil, and heroically devoted himself to great compositions. But mark the consequence. Instead of gaining seven or eight thousand pounds per annum,—enjoying the intimacy of the great and learned,—living in

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splendid hospitality,—and forming a centre for the polished society of Europe:—He would, perhaps, have made half as many hundreds per annum,—lodged in a garret,—been known to a few amateurs,—and died with the hope of being placed, some century afterwards, by the side of Guido or Correggio. The *solid pudding* was here quite an overmatch for the *empty praise*.

"The Italians," says Dr Moore, "in general very seldom take the trouble of sitting for their picture. They consider a portrait as a piece of painting which engages the admiration of nobody but the person it represents, or the painter who drew it. Those who are in circumstances to pay the best artists, generally employ them in some subject more universally interesting than the representation of human countenances staring out of a piece of canvass." By the class last named must be meant a few persons of rank and fortune, inspired by the hereditary feelings of that native soil of the arts.

Nor is the mortification of degraded powers the only one to which the portrait painter is exposed. In designing his pictures, he must often submit to the foolish whims and preposterous taste of his employers, who think that, as they are to pay for his work, they may have it to please themselves. Some of the above reflections occurred to me on the occasion of an event which I am now going to narrate.

A few mornings ago, I received the following note from Mr Hazy, whom I formerly mentioned as one of my nearest neighbours in the country:—



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"MY VERY GOOD FRIEND,—As I have thought it expedient, for several weighty causes, (part of which I may unfold to you at our more private leisure,) to bring my family up to town, for a moderate period, (more or less prolonged as circumstances may direct;) and being now settled in convenient lodgings in St Andrew Square; it would be doing me a kindness meriting consideration, if you could arrange your concerns so as to partake of our family dinner to-day, along with your worthy sister, my good friend Miss Judith, (to whom I beg my respects may be made acceptable.)—Or if your occasions should interfere with this arrangement, might I presume to solicit the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow morning at breakfast. You know I seldom trouble you except on matters of real moment.—Being always, my good sir, yours with due regard,

"ABRAHAM HAZY."

"P. S.—Miss P. and Miss L. Hazy beg to offer the Keeper of the Cabinet their felicitations on the success of his admired Essays. They hope to be pardoned for hinting, that a department more peculiarly devoted to *Poetry of the Heart*, would add still farther to the pleasure of readers of taste and feeling."

As my *occasions* did not permit me to profit by the first branch of the above alternative, I accepted of the second; and, accordingly, paid my respects to this worthy family, next morning, at breakfast. On my arrival, I found them all assembled, and was received with great cordiality. In addition to the usual mem-

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bers of the household, there were a little boy and girl, grandchildren of Mr Hazy, by his eldest son, who is at present in India. After I had been some time in the room, and had gone through the usual round of inquiries and explanations, Mr Hazy signified his wish to have a few minutes conference with me, in his study, while breakfast was preparing. When we were alone,—after desiring me to be seated, and clearing his throat with one or two preluding *hems*,—he began as follows:—"My good friend, although there are, as you know, few subjects on which I am altogether incompetent to decide;—and, indeed, it seldom happens that I have occasion to trouble others, in the way of asking advice;—yet, as I have always had a due value for your judgment and friendship, and as the subject on which I am about to speak has caused more difference of opinion than has usually happened in my family;—I thought it might tend to a satisfactory and harmonious result, if you would favour us with your sentiments touching the matter in hand. To be short, I have been for some time thinking that it is a duty which we owe posterity, to transmit to after times the figure and exterior semblance of persons any way eminent or distinguished in their day:—and, more particularly, is it incumbent on those who have the advantage of belonging to an ancient family, to perpetuate the external appearance of the successive representatives of the house, in different generations, as an ornament to its archives. These considerations have determined me to get my own portrait painted,—along with those of some others



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of the existing members of my family,—in the form of what is called a Composition, or Family Picture. The persons whom I propose to have introduced, besides myself, are, my spouse Mrs Hazy, my sister, and daughter,—together with those two children whom you saw in the next room. The variety in age and appearance will give fine scope to the talents of an artist. But as we could not wholly agree on the plan or design, we should be all much gratified with having your notions on the subject."

To this address I replied, that I was really the most unfit person in the world to advise with, on such a matter, as I had no knowledge of painting:—That I, nevertheless, much approved of the plan:—And that, before proceeding farther, I should be glad to hear the ideas of the ladies, at the breakfast table.

On our return into the next room, the subject of the family picture was resumed. "I have been just opening to our friend," said Mr Hazy, "this project or intention of a Family Picture; and he wishes, before giving an opinion, to hear our several notions as to the design. For my own part, I conceive that something in a grave and solemn fashion will best befit my character, and the dignity of our family. I might be taken, for instance, in an attitude of deep meditation, seated in my arm chair, in the robes of our great ancestor Sir Hildebrand Hazy (chamberlain of Mary Queen of Scots, and distinguished, above all his contemporaries, for the length of his beard:)—and holding in my hand, my plan for improving the navigation of the River Clyde, by levelling the *Falls*,—and for adding a portico to Melrose

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Abbey;—together with the pattern of my new-invented body clothes for pigs, by way of improving their bristles into a fine down or fleece. I could wish the scene to be laid in the terrace before the great front door of the family mansion; which might both give a view of the building, and introduce my circular clumps as a back-ground. There might also be brought in, in the distance, the road led, under my direction, to the top of *Hungerbelly Hill*; which, for the first time, afforded the means of reaching a bog, hitherto inaccessible by wheel-carriages."

"La, Papa!" interrupted Miss Lucretia, "what notions you have of the picturesque. No, positively, the only scene for our picture must be the *Lover's Glen*,—that sweet secluded spot by the river's side. I think I should like to be drawn as a shepherdess:—but then, to be sure, what shall I do for a shepherd, as there is to be no young gentleman in the piece? I must just have a copy of verses in my hand, subscribed *Celadon* or *Alexis*. But a gypsey straw-hat is so becoming, with a knot of pink ribbons at one side; and a crook wreathed with flowers,—and one or two lambs with collars and bells,—that would look so natural. Then the two children will make charming Cupids. They want nothing but tiffany wings, and a bow and quiver, and—"

"My dear Lucretia," said Miss Penelope, in a soft seducing tone, "some of your ideas are indeed very pretty; and naturally originate in those elegant studies which have so much engaged us both. For my part, the spot which had occurred to me, as a fit scene

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for our picture, was the *Elm Grove*, where I had thoughts of being represented in the character of Minerva, contemplating the olive-tree, which might be introduced as an agreeable variety among the elms."

"And pray, Madam," said I, turning to Mrs Hazy, who was busied in filling out the tea, and duly apportioning cream and sugar to every palate,—"pray what are your notions on the subject?"—"Ah, dear sir," said she, "I have no skill of such matters,—whatever pleases the rest will please me. But, at the same time, if you talk of views, and objects, and all that, I profess I think my new wash-house, and larder, the prettiest things about the place."

Finding that it would be no easy matter to reconcile all these opposite tastes,—or mould them into one harmonious design,—I said that such an undertaking was far beyond my reach; but, as the artist to whom they were to sit was familiar with such things, it might be as well to hear his sentiments, before coming to any determination. This advice was generally approved of:—But the result of the proposed conference I must defer till a future opportunity.

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## XLIII. OVER HOSPITALITY.

Hodieque manent vestigia ruris.
HOR.

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—As manners change, forms and modes of politeness change also. Among our ancestors, a grave and stiff demeanour was required in all persons who had any pretensions to rank and station; and a ceremonious attention to guests and strangers was among the indispensable rules of good breeding. We are told of the great Sully (an epithet to which he had perhaps a better claim than his heroic but frail master), that his children were not permitted to sit down in his presence; and that the worthy Statesman himself never walked abroad, in the country, without a retinue of guards and attendants. The same punctilious observance was paid to guests; who were watched like spies in a garrison, and not allowed to rest a moment from endeavours to make them happy. In this respect, methinks, our manners have changed for the better; though, perhaps, in some cases, they have gone to the other extreme of freedom and neglect. But, however this may be, there do still linger, in our remoter provinces, traces of the ancient importunity of attention: and, as it was lately my fortune to endure some annoyance from this cause, I will mention a few of the particulars for your consideration and comment.

"I had often promised my old friend Mr Good-

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will to spend some time with him in the country, and went thither last autumn to fulfil my engagement. Mr Goodwill, though not among the first-rate proprietors of his county, possesses a competent unencumbered estate. His family consists of himself, his wife, his mother, and several sons and daughters; who are truly, all of them, what is called, *the best people in the world;*—that is, most obliging, communicative, inquisitive, healthy, well-conditioned persons;—with valiant appetites, strong limbs, and cheerful faces,—but no great brilliancy of fancy, or refinement of feeling. I had been of some service to the family, so that I was received with more than usual welcome; and found every one,—down to the foot-boy and great house-dog,—disposed to make me as happy as possible. Pity that so commendable a disposition should lead, in its excess, to considerable suffering on the part of him who is its object.

"As it was late in the evening when I arrived, I was allowed, on the plea of fatigue, to retire to bed; after making a successful resistance against a hot supper, which had been prepared for me. While I was undressing, however, I heard a tap at my door; and, on opening it, found that it was one of the young gentlemen, whom his mother had sent up with a poached egg, and a tumbler of toddy,—just by way of keeping the wind off my stomach.

"I was allowed to repose, next morning, after my journey, till the hour of breakfast. On entering the parlour, where the family were assembled, I was assailed, on all hands, by inquiries after my state and condition during the night:—How I slept:—how I

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found the bed:—whether blankets were too few, or too many:—whether I liked a fire:—whether I was disturbed by the hay-carts in the morning:—whether I had been furnished with the proper allowance of water, soap, towels, basons, ewers, boot-jacks, and other needments. To these interrogations I answered as distinctly as their number and rapidity would permit; and soon after we sat down to breakfast. At this meal I cannot say I suffered much, except from a standing combination and conspiracy of the whole family to make me over-eat myself; which appeared under the various forms of plying me with fresh toast, —slipping, unawares, a slice of ham on my plate,— and trepanning me into an additional dish of tea. After the meal was over, more serious troubles began.

"Among the evils incident to humanity, I believe it is now generally allowed, that—next to the predicament of consultation by an author on his works— the most formidable, is the being abandoned, without defence, to a country gentleman, while unfolding the beauties of his estate, and his plans of improvement. Judge, then, of my feelings, when my worthy host, throwing up the window, exclaimed,—'Ah! my dear 'Sir, how glad I am that the day is so fine. We 'shall have a glorious walk. I will first fetch you a 'turn up to the feeding sheds, where you shall see a 'score of winterers that are not to be matched in the 'county. Perfect beauties, I assure you, of the right 'Skye breed. Then I will explain to you my system 'of steaming potatoes, which I am sure will delight 'you. We can take the Piggery on our way down 'to the Beech Holme, where I must have your opi-

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'nion of a young Bull, who I think will make a fi-
'gure at the next *Show*:—A gallant fellow he is,
'I promise you. Not far from that is a field of the
'Angus Oat, which you would never forgive me for
'passing over. It is really quite a curiosity, and
'the land too only taken in last year. Then we
'can come round by the new Mill:—or stay,—
'since we are so far in that direction, we might take
'the improvements I am making in the *Gulpin-*
'*quake Moss*:—It is not above two miles the short
'way, and you don't mind walking. After that, we
'can look at the summer fallow, and some herring-
'bone drains I am casting. You never saw such a
'complete piece of work as I have made of it. Then
'I will take you a short turn by my plantations on
'the hill, and ask your thoughts of the line I have
'chosen. I think I have rounded it sweetly enough.
'Then, as I would not tire you too much on the
'high grounds, (though to be sure the prospect from
'the *Herd's Knoll*—but that can stand till another
'day,) so we will just come down by the West Lodge,
'where I am putting on a new roof; and take a glance
'at the line of road I am forming through the Saugh
'meadow:—it is a little soft, but I can lend you strong
'shoes, and we are used to wet feet in the country,
'you know. Then we can make a short cut through
'the river, by the stepping-stones, (they are a little
'slippery, but the water is not deep, and we will
'lend you a hand,) and look at the lime-kilns, and
'the new garden:—there are some hot-beds on a plan
'of my own, which I think you will approve of:—And
'then—Here Dick, my boy, come you with us, to

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'run messages, and help Mr Tranquil through the 'holes:—And d'ye hear, my dear, (looking back into 'the room, to his wife,) you need not have dinner till 'half-past five, to give us plenty of time.'—'Oh! 'Papa,' cried one of the young ladies, 'don't forget 'to show Mr Tranquil the hermitage,'—'and the 'wooden bridge,'—'and the rock-work,'—'and the 'balsams,'—exclaimed another, and another.—'Be 'quiet girls,' said their mother, 'I really fear, my 'dear, you will fatigue Mr Tranquil. At the same 'time, I think he would like to see my new wash-'ing-green.'

"Such was the bill of fare provided for my recreation;—and, as was foretold, so all came to pass;—at least, all that my bodily imperfections would admit of;—but at length I became so exhausted, that my friend's good nature took the hint, and proposed returning home; where I was fain to seek refuge in my chamber till dinner time.

"Our dinner was good and plentiful; but here the importunities which had beset me at breakfast returned with tenfold vehemence. It seemed to be a matter settled in the family that I should eat of every dish at table,—all having some peculiar recommendation which could not be passed over. Then, on the score of liquids, I was assailed, from various quarters, with wines foreign and domestic, ale, spruce beer, ginger beer, and milk punch,—besides the option between a dram of whisky, or a sip of *Noyau*. Having, in this manner, been stuffed to repletion at the first course, I was reminded to keep a corner for the

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grouse which was approaching in the second. With this I accordingly recommenced; and, after a while, was congratulating myself on finally closing my labours, when the good lady, taking advantage of my head being turned away, conveyed an additional leg and wing on my plate, observing that I had made no dinner.

"In the evening, I would have liked to amuse myself with reading, but, by way of better pastime, was enforced to a rubber at whist with the good old grandmother. Then the young ladies, one after another, went over their lessons on the *piano forte;* and, as this was designed expressly for my benefit, I was obliged to a close attention all the while, besides giving my opinion of the performance. The younger branches of the family were also called up, in succession, to favour me with their recitations from Mason's Collection, and the Juvenile Instructor. I was half tempted to exclaim, as Dr Johnson did, on a similar occasion,—'Could not the pretty dears say it all at once?'—To conclude, the hot supper which I had escaped the evening before, awaited me to-night; and it seemed to be fully expected that I was to do the duties of both.

"Next morning I was awakened betimes, by one of the boys, to let me know that the finest sport in the world was going on in the barn; being a rat-hunt by tame weasels, which belonged to an itinerant professor of that art:—and that he had drawn off his pack purely to wait for me. I would willingly have excused myself; but, as my rest was already broken, and my young friend very urgent, I e'en rose and followed him.

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Just as this pastime had finished, one of the youngest boys coming up to me with a significant look, whispered that there was a sheep to be killed before breakfast, and offered to conduct me to the spot. He seemed not a little surprised at my declining.

"In the course of this day I was mounted on a rough-going pad, and jolted for nine or ten miles, over bad roads, to see a water-fall; which, after all our labour, looked so pitiful when we got at it, that my friend was obliged to make its apology on the score of dry weather. To atone for this, the rain caught us on our way home, and ducked us to the skin. Next day, I was dragged to a fishing party on a lake, some way off; whence—after getting chilled, wearied, dirtied, and finally overturned into the water,—we came back without any fish. On another day, the father being engaged at the Quarter Sessions, turned me over to his sons, who insisted on taking me a-hare-coursing to the *Gulpinquake Moss*, already commemorated. In this pastime I struggled through long heath, stuck fast in the bogs, and had well nigh broken my neck by tumbling into a sand-pit.

Among the days of my sojourn, there occurred a Sunday, the events of which are too memorable to be passed over in silence. From the bustle of preparation in the morning, and ornate appearance of the family at breakfast, I conjectured that all intended to go to church; and, on being asked to join the party, I, of course, assented. The distance was only two miles, and I should have liked the walk; but, as the family carriage was ordered for my express accommoda-

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tion, this was not to be thought of. I was, therefore, to occupy it, along with the two elder ladies. Presently one of the sons came in, and whispered to his mother, that Dick the driver wanted his Sunday jacket. The boy was straightway silenced, and the lady left the room.

"On proceeding to the door, we found the vehicle drawn up, whose primitive appearance would have excited no small amusement in Bond Street or Piccadilly. The plough-horses had been well rubbed down, and put into the harness; but, in the haste, one or two of their fetlocks left untrimmed, betrayed their more vulgar and useful daily occupation. Their conductor had now got on his Sunday jacket, but, having been made for him some time since, the sleeves were of the shortest. As we were about to embark, it was recollected that Miss Jenny had a cold, and Miss Sukey had sprained her ankle, and Master George had taken physic,—all good reasons for their going in the carriage. With these, accordingly, and the mother and grandmother, I was stowed in a chaise of ordinary dimensions;—the windows being kept rigidly shut, for the benefit of the invalids.

"In addition to a hot day, and a rough road, our postilion, seduced by vanity, had chosen to ride a young and skittish horse. This creature, unused to the rumbling of a carriage, exhibited many vagaries, and, when touched by the spur, became quite uproarious. The other horse again,—a staid phlegmatic personage, who had turned the glebe for three *lustrums*,—kept a regular jogging pace; and, to every

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admonition of the lash, only answered by a whisk of his tail. This contrariety of sentiment much impeded our progress, and put the poor lad so to his wits-end, that I doubt not he wished himself up to the ankles in a wet fallow, rather than engaged with the *Gentles* and their wheel carriages. The return home, in the stifled vehicle, after service was over, added one more item to the pleasures of the day.

" Various other plans and projects of delight were in store for me, which would have filled many days to come; but I had already enough of such pleasures, and was glad to escape from the oppressive kindness of my entertainers. All this annoyance arose from a mistaken desire to oblige. I am by no means disinclined to the pleasures of the country, when left to take them in my own way; and the error of my friends merely lay in not letting me alone.

" You must not suppose, Mr Keeper, from what I have said, that I disapprove of the cordial hospitality of old times; or think it well exchanged for the freezing inattention of some stately mansions, where you may live for a week, without the host or hostess seeming to know that you are in the house. The annoyances of the ancient system, though sometimes a little teazing, are much relieved by considering the motives from which they spring. I should be sorry to injure so noble a plant, when only meaning to prune its exuberances.

" It is, according to Mr Burke, one of the nicest problems in legislation, to determine how much of human conduct should be regulated by positive law,

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and how much left to private discretion. The same is the secret of true politeness;—when to pay attention, and when to let alone. To discover this secret, the chief requisites are a kind heart, and reasonable good sense,—with some little natural tact, and knowledge of the world. When these unite in the master and inmates of a house, we see the perfection of hospitality,—and, indeed, of society;—where the guest can change at will from company to solitude,—pursue his fancy without interrupting others, or being interrupted himself,—and enjoy at once the pleasures of attention and freedom.—I am, Sir, your constant reader,

"JOSEPH TRANQUIL.

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## XLIV. UNDER HOSPITALITY.

Superba civium
Potentiorum limina.

HOR.

Enough of show, and luxury, and art,
But still we miss the welcome of the heart.

ANON.

"TO THE KEEPER OF THE CABINET.

"SIR,—Your correspondent Mr Tranquil has made himself very merry with the good-natured officious hospitality of a worthy family in the country, to whom he paid a visit; but he has, at the same time, had the candour to take notice of an opposite extreme



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of indifference and neglect, to be found in certain stately and frozen mansions which elevate themselves in our land. As I chanced, during the course of last summer, to suffer under this gelid influence, I beg leave to send you a few of the particulars, by way of counterpart or *pendant* to Mr Tranquil's narrative.

" My father was proprietor of a small estate in the county of * * * *, which circumstances rendered it necessary to sell a good many years ago. As our family, however, had been long connected with that part of the country, I have still retained many friends in it, whom I occasionally visit. While I was there last summer, I was told by every body that it was necessary for me to pay my respects at Castle Cheveron, the seat of Sir Charles and Lady Harriet Lofty. Sir Charles is a man of large estate, and ancient family; and, some years ago, married the daughter of an English marquis. He had formerly invited me to his house; and more lately repeated that civility, on occasion of some intercourse by letter that took place between us, in which it was my good fortune to be of some small service to him. I had no great stomach to this adventure (if the truth must be told), being of a shy awkward turn, and hearing that her ladyship was not very affable in her demeanour. But I was so repeatedly urged by my friends, who said that the thing was quite indispensable,—and might be much for the advantage of a young man entering the world like me,—that I was at length over persuaded, and set forth on my visit.

" As I am not much burdened with the gifts of



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fortune, my travelling equipment was none of the most splendid. I rode my own poney, without a servant; and carried, in my great-coat pocket, a sufficient change of dress for dinner. On reaching the outer entrance gate, I found it locked, and exerted my lungs for some time in vain, to procure admittance. At length, on ringing a bell, I perceived several faces reconnoitring me through the window of the porter's lodge; and soon after a little boy came out, and opened the gate. As I passed the door of the lodge, the porter and his wife were standing there; and in their looks and demeanour I could not recognise much respect for a single gentleman, who rode his own pad, without a servant. I proceeded towards the great mansion, and on my way passed a party of gentlemen who were amusing themselves at a fish-pond not far from the road. They turned a moment to stare at me, but did not leave their sport.

"When I arrived at the Castle gate, I dismounted, and reaching at the massive knocker, gave one or two strokes, which, though applied with a hesitating hand, returned such an echo from the spacious saloons and corridors within, that I shrunk back in dismay. A long pause ensued; and I was deliberating with myself whether to renew the assault, or fairly mount and make off, while it was yet time,—when I heard the sound of footsteps, and presently the door was opened by a servant in gorgeous livery. I asked whether Sir Charles or Lady Harriet were at home; to which, after scanning me with a look of no great deference, he answered, that Sir Charles had rode

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out; and that his lady was in her *boudoir*, and never saw company so early in a morning,—though it was now past three o'clock. I then desired to know whether any body could take my horse. He said that none of the servants were at present disengaged; but if I would go round to the stables (which he pointed out at a little distance), I might probably find some of the grooms. Seeing nothing better for it, I mounted again, and paced slowly towards the stables. The desire of retreating now came upon me with fresh vehemence; but I was ashamed to do so after having made myself known. On entering the stable-yard, I saw a couple of grooms cleaning a carriage. I asked one of them to put up my horse; but he answered sulkily that it was none of his business. The other,—after measuring me and my nag with a knowing eye, and squirting some tobacco juice out of his mouth,—said that the stable for strange horses was at the other end of the yard; and at the same time bawled out 'Tom!' whence I augured some assistance. No Tom however appeared; so leading my horse towards the place indicated, I found the stable door half open. On looking in, I saw a long range of stalls unprovendered and untenanted, except by one luckless poney, whose anxious looks around,—and rattling of his cord in the ring of the manger as he turned his neck,—shewed how little attraction he had there. As no help was in view, I e'en unsaddled my poor nag, and tied him up to bear his fellow sorrowful company at spare commons.

"As I came out, I had the good fortune to en-



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counter *Monsieur Thomas* practising upon the Jew's harp. I entreated him to suspend his music, and afford my beast a little food and dressing; promising that it should be the better for him when I went off next day.

"The hour of dinner being yet far off, I resolved to take a turn through the pleasure-grounds, and digest, as I might, this prologue to a friendly reception. The place possesses great beauties, which have been improved with taste; and nature was now dressed in all the luxury of summer. As my walk proceeded, amid soft breezes, and balmy smells, and the melody of a thousand birds, I forgot the mortifications I had already suffered, and those I had still reason to fear. After rambling some time in a maze of shrubs and underwood, I came upon a brawling stream, which divided the grounds, and wound through roots, and rocks, and bushes, in all the wildness of nature. I traced its course downwards till I came to a rustic bridge, by which I crossed over; and soon afterwards getting clear of the enclosures, I found myself on an open avenue or drive. I had proceeded here but a little way, when I heard the trampling of horses behind, and looking back, saw several gentlemen riding towards me. As they drew near, I recognised one of them to be the master of the domain; but as he did not seem to know me;—and indeed eyed me through his glass with a look of civil inquiry, as a trespasser on his grounds;—I had to go through the ceremony of introducing myself. On hearing my name, he accosted me politely, and hoped I meant to stay dinner.

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To this I made a suitable reply;—and Sir Charles, after giving me some directions how to vary my walk, —and at the same time to avoid disturbing his preserve of pheasants,—rode on.

"When I again arrived at the mansion, I saw nobody; so was obliged, a second time, to essay the ponderous knocker. On the footman appearing, I inquired if Sir Charles had come home, and was answered in the affirmative. I was shown into a large drawing-room, where the charms of solitude were only varied by the screaming of two cockatoos, and the barking of a lap-dog. I found nothing better to console myself with than an old newspaper, and had perused its columns twice over, down to the arrivals at *Lloyd's*, and *prices current*, when I was aroused by the entrance of a footman bearing a vase of flowers. Him I petitioned to let Sir Charles know I was here, and soon after the Baronet appeared. One or two gentlemen afterwards dropt in; and as it was now about six o'clock, the bell rung for dressing. All the company separated, Sir Charles promising to send a servant to shew me my room.

"As to this matter, however, there was a want of right understanding among the domestics; for, after crossing and recrossing several times,—during which period I remained cooling my heels in the passage,—I was at length ushered into a bed-room. Here I had just thrown off my boots, when a lacquey broke in, saying he was sorry for the mistake,—but this was not my room. Thither I was accordingly conducted, not in the best humour imaginable; and though the

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apartment was little better than a closet on the attic floor, I was glad to be left in peace.

" My toilette was soon completed, but I was in no haste to descend to the drawing-room. A second bell, however, was rung, which I took for the summons to dinner; and down I went, with such alacrity as if an additional pound of lead had been buckled on at every footstep. On reaching the landing-place, I was quite bewildered in my topography, among the maze of doors and passages; and never should have found my way, but for the help of a friendly housemaid, who happened to pass. Under her auspices, I took the proper course towards the drawing-room; at the door of which stood several powdered lacqueys, who marshalled my way in. On entering the room, I found it full of company; and, among others, a lady sat playing at chess with a gentleman who was addressed by the title of Colonel. Her back was turned towards me, and Sir Charles taking me up, said, 'Lady Harriet, allow me to introduce Mr Shy.' She paused a moment from her game, and turning half round, looked at me, through her glass, with that expression of cold distasteful curiosity with which we regard a frog or a spider:— then, without a word or token of acknowledgment, but a slight bend of the neck, she resumed her game. Near this party stood, looking on, my Lord Icicle, a noble peer of the most unbending perpendicularity of form, and stiffness of neckcloth. His lordship never condescended to utter above two words at a

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time: and his nearest approach to a laugh was a slight simper, half-disclosing his ivory teeth.

"Not much encouraged by this gracious reception, and knowing nobody in the room, I retreated to a window, where I tried to engage my thoughts on the agreeable prospects without. I had not sat long there, when a little girl of Sir Charles's, about four years old, approached, and began to play with the seals of my watch. I took the pretty creature on my knee; and was so much touched with this gleam of nature breaking through the chilling atmosphere of state which surrounded me, that, if I durst, I would have kissed her. On this freedom, however, I did not venture: nor did I long enjoy the sweet companionship of my little friend; for her mamma, disapproving of such familiarity, called her away.

"The dinner was at length announced by the rowl of a gong, and went on much like other dinners. Every thing was in the highest style of elegance and luxury; and I felt my awkwardness somewhat relieved amidst the engagements of eating and drinking. Sir Charles took some notice of me, by asking me to drink wine, and so forth; but her ladyship did not deem attention to her guests among the duties of hospitality incumbent on her. She lounged at the head of the table,—or at least near the head,—the actual summit being occupied by the gallant Colonel. The lady sat next him, and was supported by my Lord Icicle on the other side. To them she addressed all her discourse;—and, for my poor part, did not vouchsafe a word or look to me during the whole en-

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tertainment. The only person, besides her gelid lord and gay colonel, whom she deigned to notice, was a forward buffoon squire, who sometimes addressed her from the bottom of the table, and who seemed to be admitted in the character of butt. I could not help admiring how well he laid on his flattery, under the assumed mask of bluntness and freedom.

" In the evening we joined the ladies in the drawing-room; where, after sipping coffee, the whole company was divided into card parties, except myself, who declined playing. I had recourse to a book, which, though none of the brightest, enabled me to struggle with sleep till long past midnight, when one of those abortive suppers you complain of made a short *entrée*, and then disappeared. This scarcely interrupted the cards:—and now seeing the same course renewed, without any prospect of termination, I took advantage of the general engagement, and stole off to bed.

" I had proposed to depart in the morning before breakfast, and descended between eight and nine o'clock. On looking into several rooms, I saw only extinguished candles, windows open, and chairs in disorder;—with here and there a footman half awake rubbing the tables, or a housemaid scouring the grate. I found it, however, raining so hard, that I resolved to wait till a later hour. I therefore retreated back to my aerial citadel, till the summons of breakfast. The commencement of this meal was, by my computation, about half-past eleven, and its extreme duration two o'clock. The guests dropped in at different

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times; the lady of the mansion appearing among the last. Her air and manner possessed the same finished *nonchalance*, and neglect of every body, which I had so much admired the day before. As the repast drew to a close, various parties of pleasure were settled for the morning. Lady Harriet challenged the Colonel to a game at piquet in her *boudoir*. The fair Lady Languish arranged a match at billiards with Captain Thunderbolt of the King's Own. My Lord Icicle so far exerted and condescended, as to offer Miss Carmine a drive in his curricle. Admiral A., Mr B., and Sir C. D., escorted Lady E. and the Honourable Miss F. to a party on the water. And the Baronet himself went to lay off a new approach, under the direction of Mr Capability Pickpurse, the great designer.

"For my own part, finding myself again left alone, I made my way to the stables, without further ceremony; judging the formalities of leave-taking to be quite exploded. I there found my poor beast, who had been treated with nearly the same attention as his master;—for the character of servants is formed by that of the house they belong to. As for the *Sieur* Thomas, having neglected his duty, he missed his promised reward. Seeing nobody near, I put on the saddle myself, and jogged off, ruminating on the events above detailed; and thinking that I could have endured a few of those troublesome attentions which your correspondent Mr Tranquil complains of, in exchange for that heroic freedom and neglect which I was permitted to enjoy.—I am, sir, your very humble admirer, "SAMUEL SHY."

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## XLV. SCRIBLERUS REDIVIVUS.

### CHAP. XIX.

*Some Account of the Demise and Funeral Rites of* Doctor Cornelius Scriblerus; *with his* Latter Will *and other* Reliquiæ.

In the course of this winter Doctor Cornelius had fallen off much in his flesh; and being arrived at a mature age, he began to make preparations for his final departure. When I speak of a mature age, however, I rather comply with the prejudices of modern times, than express the Doctor's own opinion; as, although in his 75th year, he declared that he should still be in the flower of his life, were things ordered nowadays as they had been by the wise ancients. The Doctor was troubled with a catarrh, and defluxion on the lungs, for which his physicians recommended phlebotomy; but he had small esteem for any modern learning; and finding from Aristotle that such affections of the chest are wont to yield to the influence of Music, he looked out a very rare *Tibia* which he had by him, and sent for a minstrel who sometimes plied below his window. This man the Doctor undertook to instruct in the true antique method of touching and modulating the instrument; for since his famous experiment with the *Lyra*, he was rather puffed up with his skill in the ancient music. The poor man was accordingly brought in from the street,

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and would fain have stuck to his own *pipe*, but this the Doctor would by no means suffer. They accordingly set to work with the *Tibia*, but produced such horrible discords as frightened the whole family. In vain did the Doctor turn over divers treatises concerning the music of antiquity: In vain, at every new attempt, would he stretch himself back in his chair, to imbibe the healing strains: The *Tibia* still remained inexorable; and the Doctor was obliged to be carried to bed, having much exhausted himself by his efforts on this occasion.

The good old man finding himself daily growing worse, called his son Martin to his bedside, and addressed him as follows:—"My dear boy, I perceive "that my end is fast approaching, the prematurity "whereof I mainly attribute to my compliance, in part, "with the vicious modes of life which have prevailed "in modern times. But, before departing, I would "fain leave thee my exhortation to avoid the same "error, and to persevere in such courses as I have oc-"casionally followed, in my better judgment. When "thou first sawest the light, I did, in a manner, de-"vote thee to the pursuits of Science and Antiquity, "and therein I trust thou wilt continue to the end. "Such directions as I have thought meet for perform-"ing the last offices to my body, I will leave in writ-"ing behind me. Thou wilt find moreover put down "a list of my substance, comprehending a few choice "fragments of antiquity, which I value above all the "rest. The whole will be thine, excepting some small "bequests for the advancement of science, which thou

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" wilt not grudge; and a few tokens to my learned " friends. Thou wilt also find sundry hints proposed " for further curious research, which thou wilt not fail " to turn to fitting use. And now, my dear child, " receive my last blessing.—Take away that filthy " basin, and put my gruel into the delicate Etruscan " *patera* which hath so long been the ornament of " our house."—" Which *patera* do you mean, sir?" said Martin: " Which?" resumed Cornelius, " Are " there more than one?"—" Yes indeed, sir: That " other left you by your friend Dr Mud."—" O aye: " —Truly I had forgotten:—Then fetch them both. " And verily this increase of *pateras* bringeth to my " mind that lepid distich of the old comic poet:—

" Tu peperisti Amphitruonem; Ego alium peperi Sosiam;
" Nunc si *pateram patera* peperit, omnes congeminavimus."

A few days after this dialogue the good Doctor breathed his last.

On opening his papers, the following instructions were found, touching the Funeral:—" Notwithstand- " ing my just admiration of the ancients, and the ob- " servance of their practices, at which I have endea- " voured, however imperfectly, throughout my life, " I do not think it convenient to enjoin any ceremo- " nial at my Funeral Rites, or *Exsequiæ*, further " than may be followed forth without inconvenience, " or offence to modern prejudices. First then, I desire " that my body may be bathed, and anointed with " sweet odours, and thereafter indued in my best robe " or *toga*, (*videlicet* my *Paduasoy* night-gown), in-

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" stead of the ordinary modern covering: but I dis-
" pense with the *Obolus* dropped into the mouth,
" and with the sprig of *Cypress* over the door. And
" although the elegant usage of *Cremation* or *Burn-*
" *ing* came to be general among the Romans, in the
" later ages of their history; yet as the carrying it
" into effect, in this city, might be attended with
" trouble; and as we find from Cicero that, in the
" earlier times of the Republic, *Inhumation* or *Bu-*
" *rial* was common; I approve of conforming with the
" modern practice in this matter. As I wish the ob-
" sequies to be private, or what the ancients denomi-
" nated *Funus tacitum*, I would omit the music of
" *Tibicines*, and a choir to chant the funeral song:
" —Still less do I insist on a troop of *Mimes* and
" *Scurræ*, to play off antic gestures before the pro-
" cession. It will be enough that the *Designator*, or
" *Undertaker*, attend with his *Black Lictors* (as
" they are aptly termed by Horace), and a few of my
" nearest kindred, and learned friends. As the noble
" practice of carrying in front the images of our an-
" cestors hath not been usual among us, and might
" lead to misconstructions, I also pass that over;—
" only I think that the small bronze head of my re-
" nowned forefather METRODORUS SCRIBLERUS, the
" *Coryphæus* of Germany, might be slipped under
" the gown of one of the attendants, and brought out
" at the *Tumulus* or *Grave*, to witness the earth
" closed over his descendant. I could also wish that,
" at the same time, a short discourse or *Laudatio* of
" the deceased might be pronounced, in the Latin



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" tongue, by one of my learned friends. The fashion " of the *Sarcophagus* I leave to the taste or fancy of " the undertaker; and instead of any costly mauso- " leum or sepulchral edifice, I desire that nothing but " a simple stone be erected, containing a notice of my " labours for the furtherance of knowledge, and the " good of mankind."

The Doctor's funeral was ordered exactly according to his instructions; and afterwards his repositories were further examined, in presence of some select friends. It is needless to give, at full length, his Latter Will, which was expressed with the usual verbosities: but a few of the bequests and remembrances may be noted, for the satisfaction of the curious.

" *Imprimis.*—To my much esteemed friend Dr Pere- " grinus, or Peregrine Dusty, of All Soul's College, Ox- " ford, I give and bequeath my M.S. Essay on the true " involution or twirl of the Grecian circumflex: As also " my inquiry concerning the dot above the Roman *i*, and " stroke through the *t*: With full liberty to the said Doctor, " his heirs and assigns, to print, publish, and vend the " same, and to draw, ingather, and appropriate, for their " own use and behoof, all and singular the profits, bene- " fits, and commodities, therefrom accruing."

" *Item.*—To my learned brother and coadjutor in my " antiquarian labours, Mr Nahum Verdigris, of the county " of Salop, Gent., I leave my Tractate on the method of " cherishing, augmenting, and restoring the *Ærugo*, or *Rust*, " on coins, medals, and other remains of antiquity: To- " gether with the most approved rules for judging, by the " colour, taste, and smell, of the peculiar qualities, and age " thereof."

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" *Item.*—I do hereby invest in the hands of my worthy " and scientific friends, Sir Jacob Jumble, Knt., Dr Ma- " thew Moth, the Rev. Mr Humdrum, and Dr Cobweb, " all of Caius College, Cambridge, the sum of L. 500, to- " wards the founding a Travelling Fellowship for the dis- " covery of that variety of the human species distinguished " by the *Cauda prehensilis*, or *Tail*:—a variety well " known to the ancients, but which hath hitherto escaped " modern inquiry."

" *Item.*—To that painful searcher into antiquity, Mr " Moses Kill-dried, I bequeath my curious Latin MS. " supposed to be the only authentic remains of the *Sybil- " line Books* which have reached to our times."

" *Item.*—To my ingenious friend, and lover of ancient " art, Mr Timothy Tetotum, I leave that rare *Clasp* or " *Rivet*, which belonged to the armour of *Curius Dentatus*; " with my Dissertation tracing the progress thereof from " the original owner into my hands. Moreover, I do be- " queath to him my curious *Brazen Slipper*, supposed to " have been that of the philosopher *Empedocles*, which was " cast out from the crater of Mount Etna, after the afore- " said sage had thrown himself thereinto, as noted by the " poet:—

——— Ardentem frigidus Ætnam
Insiluit.

" *Item.*—To that venerable and noble lady, and encou- " rager of genealogical researches, the Lady Penthesilea " Steelback, I give and bequeath the pedigree I constructed " of her ancient family, tracing the same upwards to the " landing of *Brut*, or *Bruth*, or *Bruith*, (for on this the " learned are divided,) in the British Island, with *Notes* " and *Scholia*: Furthermore, my precious *Frustum* or " *Remnant* of Queen Elizabeth's under-petticoat."

There was also found among the Doctor's papers a

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list of important hints, which he had entitled, "*Desideranda*, or Subjects of Inquiry still recommended to the diligence of the Learned:"—Among which the following are a few:—

"1. It being laid down by great writers on the law, that "our first ancestor Adam received the whole of that "divine science by intuition; *quæritur*—What might "be his notions of the writ of *Capias*, or *Fi. Fa*?"

"2. Whether Eve ever used a comb?"

"3. Plan for restoring and multiplying that breed of "wolves, by which *Romulus* and *Remus* were suckled, "towards the nurture and education of Heroes, the "race whereof seemeth at present on the decline."

"4. Plan of an Experimental Farm, to be cultivated after "the rules laid down by Hesiod and Virgil: the "benefit whereof, in improving our agriculture, and "increasing the supply of *vivres* and esculents to the "community, cannot be doubted."

"5. A vindication of the *Queen of Sheba* from the reports "of certain evil tongues, which have insinuated that "the result of her visit to King Solomon was a fine "chopping boy: And whether, if any such misfor-"tune fell out, it did not proceed from the pure love "of wisdom?"

"6. Whether further proofs might not be had of the set-"tlement of the Trojan Prince *Æneas* in the province "of Munster (particularly from the striking resem-"blance between the Greek and Irish languages); "with an exposure of the malice and sinister views of "the poet Virgil, in attempting to throw discredit on "that event?"

"7. Whether that famous beauty, Helen of Troy, was "*nine* feet high, or, as others have affirmed, only "*seven*?"

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" 8. Whether the charms of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, may
" not have been furthered and augmented by the
" usage of drinking pearls dissolved in vinegar,—the
" same having been her ordinary condiment after din-
" ner? With hints to the Fair Sex, touching the
" swallowing or deglutition thereof, as a cosmetic or
" beautifier of the complexion."

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## XLVI. A VISIT TO THE COURTS OF LAW.

Barbaras ædes aditure mecum,
Quas *Eris* semper fovet inquieta,
Lis ubi late sonat, et togatum
Estuat agmen.

GRAY.

THIS metropolis being the seat of the highest Courts of Law, it will easily be believed that a person of my inquisitive turn after all the varieties of human life, must sometimes pay them a visit. My readers will recollect that I was myself originally destined for that learned profession; and although I made little progress in a knowledge of its minuter details, yet I have always considered those studies which regard the principle and theory of laws as among the most dignified and useful of any. In another taste I am perhaps more singular, namely, a relish for the conversation of the members of the legal profession. In this country of Scotland, where the calls of business are not so severe or engrossing as to exclude all time for liberal study; but where, on the contrary,



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some of the highest names in literature are found among the members of the bar, the conversation of our gownsmen is free from that narrowness and pedantry which is apt to distinguish professional men; and may be resorted to with pleasure and improvement by those accustomed to the best tone of society and letters. Even the common joke against men of the law,—their disposition to split hairs, and cavil on nice distinctions,—I have not found in their ordinary conversation;—at least among the older and higher members of the cloth. Indeed, the habits of strict reasoning to which they are daily accustomed in the business of life;—their constant experience of the importance of facts, and the unimportance of display;—of the necessity of discharging superfluities, and coming at once to the solid grounds of every question;—these things give (if I may use the expression) an abridgment and condensation to their knowledge, not commonly found among other classes. For this reason, I have much pleasure in conversing with the gentlemen of the long robe;—while they, on the other hand,—fancying in me, from my former studies, a sort of *esprit de corps*,—and happy to escape, in general conversation, from the staple of professional matter with which they are surfeited,—have always received me with great cordiality.

When I first began to visit the Courts, after an absence of many years, there was nothing which struck me more than the increased numbers by whom they were frequented. In my younger days, that spacious and beautiful hall called the *Outer-House*

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(formerly occupied by the Parliament of Scotland), was curtailed of half its fair proportions by the intrusion of little peddling shops or stalls, somewhat resembling those of Exeter Change in London, or of the *Galeries* leading to the *Palais de Justice* at Paris. The occupants of such a neighbourhood show their courage at least, if not their discretion, in venturing so near the perilous vortex. They remind one of the vineyards and cottages which spring up under the very crater of Etna and Vesuvius, in defiance of the turbid cauldron constantly brewing or raging within. The space occupied by those little sale-boxes in our Court, reached nearly over half the room, and was separated from the rest by a wooden partition. But even this half which remained for legal resort, used to be less crowded than the whole hall now is, when unobstructed from end to end. Whether this difference betoken the increase of wealth, or of wisdom, among my worthy countrymen, I will not take upon me to determine. But when I now looked upon the moving multitude, all deeply engaged in their respective pursuits:—when I considered, as a sort of specimen of the world without, this *arena* where all the passions and affairs of men,—the *votum, timor, ira, voluptas, gaudia, discursus,*—came to be debated:—when I contemplated the faces full of interest passing to and fro, and did not recognise one of those whom I remembered, as busy and as anxious, on the same spot, now slumbering in their graves:—I could not but give a passing sigh to the vanity and mutation of human things.



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With this feeling was mingled one almost directly opposite. The sight of so much earnestness, and bustle, and eager engagement, contrasted with my own idleness, inspired that respect which a mere spectator cannot help feeling, with all his philosophy, when in presence of the solid and serious business of mankind.

The different halls or chambers in which the Courts meet are at once spacious and convenient; and are embellished with specimens of modern sculpture which might have done honour to the porticoes of Athens. In point of accommodation, I think we are still superior to our brethren of the south;—though the courts at Westminster Hall are much improved in comparison with those paltry chambers, where a Hardwicke and a Mansfield, in former days, delivered the oracles of reason and justice. In point of amusement to a stranger, however, in attending the courts, the balance is quite against us; for so much of our legal debate takes place in the form of printed papers, that the cases are scarcely intelligible to one who has not read these;—not to mention a grievous abridgment of the eloquence of the tongue, in being so much forestalled by the press. Occasional scintillations of debate however do, now and then, break forth, very lively and amusing to a looker-on; more especially in the Outer Hall, where the business is in a preparatory stage, and is conducted more *viva voce*. It is here, accordingly, that I most frequently take my stand, beside the bar; and remark, in the succession of actors, and their parts, the infinite variety of

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human concerns, and the modes of carrying them on.

In this survey, nothing is more strange and amusing to one of the uninitiated than the imperturbable ease and readiness with which the pleaders pass from one argument or passion to another,—(*iras et verba locant*),—some not a little inconsistent among themselves,—but all advanced with equal earnestness, fluency, and apparent sincerity. Sometimes indeed, in the hurry and succession of business, the learned gentlemen lose their cue, and forget what they ought to ask;—nay, not unfrequently, are at a loss to recollect whether they are for plaintiff or defendant. But, on any such slip occurring, it is wonderful how dexterously they recover themselves. One morning lately, I observed a barrister come up, and begin a very warm invective against his opponents for their delay in lodging a document. It was truly affecting to hear him enlarge on the ruin of protracted litigation,—and the abuse of the forms of justice, to obtain delay. Presently the attorney's clerk, who took charge of his case, came running up; and finding how things stood, jogged him on the elbow, and whispered very earnestly, —"Sir, sir!—you're all wrong.—It's we that want "delay;—We must produce the paper;—we've put it "off six times already."—Upon this, the whole air and countenance of the speaker suddenly changed. He assumed the most mild and insinuating softness; —and spoke of the pressure of other affairs,—the delay of cross posts,—and the difficulty of getting information from the country;—with a solemn promise

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that the paper should be lodged by Tuesday at farthest. The judge received all this with a professional smile, as if used to such misadventures, and remembering perhaps something similar in his own days of practice.

But, besides this attention to the proper business of the place, I often amuse myself with walking up and down the floor,—considering the various groups assembled there,—forming conjectures as to their pursuits and characters,—or collecting scraps of their passing conversation. This hall is not merely resorted to by those engaged in the business of the court; but is a general *rendezvous*, or lounging-room, where all affairs are transacted, and all persons assemble, whether busy or idle. It affords, therefore a sample of many classes and callings besides that of the law.

In the course of such a walk of observation, a few days ago, I remarked two gentlemen of the long robe pacing backward and forward, in earnest talk,—and doubted not that they were discussing some knotty point of law. In passing, all that I could gather was the few following words, uttered with much emotion: —"No, sir!—the soup was intolerable!—Unless he "mend his manners, we must positively change the "house."

A little to one side, I descried a group of the younger brethren laying their heads together, in deep discussion, as I supposed, of some new case or argument. One, in particular, was holding forth with such fluency and animation, that I drew near, in hopes of hearing something curious.—"Depend upon it, gen-

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" tlemen," said he, " that the *non mousseux* is the " preferable wine. I myself took the trouble of tasting " the whole packages."

Near this party I beheld a gay attorney, dressed in the extremity of the mode, with boots that might have excited the envy of Bond Street,—followed by a forlorn looking man, in a threadbare coat, who seemed to be urging a topic not very acceptable to his hearer.— " Indeed, sir," said the attorney, adjusting his neckcloth, " I am sorry for it,—but law is expensive,—fees " of court so high;—much in advance, sir, I give you " my honour;—Fear I must trouble you for another " remittance."——

Seeing two barristers retired apart in very earnest colloquy, I made sure of finding something more important than I had hitherto met with. I took a seat therefore near them, and overheard—" Excuse me, sir, —" when you stand at the point of seven, and the best " trump lies in the *ombre* hand"—— Turning to another group, at the end of the bench where I sat, in hopes of better success, I was saluted with—" Well, " I'll bet four guineas to one on that:—You never, in " your life, saw a dog quarter the ground in such a " style:—I bagged fifteen brace to him single-handed, " before twelve o'clock, the first day of the moors, last " season."

It would be tedious to put down all the tags and ends of discourse which I overheard, in the course of these perambulations; or the curious contrast which sometimes appeared between the subject and the speakers. One was discussing the merits of a favourite

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actress, another the price of wool:—One was pointing out the beauties of the hall;—another recommending a cheap tailor;—and a third paying off the national debt. Some were declaiming on the beauties of poetry;—others on the badness of the pavement:—Some were exchanging poneys;—others fitting up a new library;—and others again making appointments for dinner. This last, indeed, was the great staple of communication. On casting up my list, I found that, of twenty instances, ten related, in some shape or other, to the weighty business of eating or drinking. But there was one topic which seemed banished, by general consent, from within the four walls of the edifice,—*videlicet*, the grave concernments of the law.

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## XLVII. THE TRIBUNAL OF JUSTICE.

A VISION.

> ———Rapit in jus:—Clamor utrinque:—
> Undique concursus.
>
> HOR.

AFTER one of those visits to the courts of law which I have described in my last paper, I strolled into the fields in the neighbourhood of this city; and, tempted by the fineness of the weather, and the noble prospects which opened upon me at every step, I continued my walk longer than usual, and was somewhat exhausted when I reached home. As the hour of dinner was still at some distance, I sat down to read: but I need not tell the experienced that a little

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fatigue of body, joined to a good easy chair, is much against the activity of the waking powers. Mine accordingly soon gave way to the soft necessity of slumber, during which Fancy presented me with the following picture of what I had lately been contemplating in its real form.

I found myself again in the Hall of Justice, but, with the flexibility of such creations, the floor, walls, and ceiling, gradually expanded themselves into a large open space or wilderness, surrounded by a distant inclosure, and intersected by many walks and pathways, which, though crossing in various directions, seemed all to have a tendency to one point. At this point was erected a throne of marble, on which sat a female form of great dignity and beauty. From her attributes of the sword and scales, I discovered her to be THEMIS, the Goddess of Justice. She was attended by several other majestic figures, such as TRUTH, WISDOM, and FORTITUDE; and close beside her sat a singular form, bearing such a resemblance to her, that I plainly saw that it had been designed after her as a model: but the varieties and imperfections were such, as shewed the one to be the work of God, the other that of man. The name of this figure was LAW.

On the space beneath were innumerable votaries, all making towards the judgment-seat. Most of them had impatience and dissatisfaction painted in their looks, and complained of the many stops and impediments which delayed their approach towards the Goddess. I observed that they all seemed confi-

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dent of success, if they could once get themselves to be fairly heard; and quite forgot that where there are two parties to a game, one must be the loser. There were some few whose countenances bore a more cheerful aspect, who were full of hope and bustle, and seemed to look forward to the vicissitudes of their warfare with the keenness of gamblers; in whom the uncertainty of success, and even occasional disaster, only augment the relish.

Although the Tribunal of Justice seemed to be at no great distance, the approach to it, as I have hinted, was far from direct or easy. Between the Goddess and her votaries lay a thick and tangled forest, called the *Labyrinth of Litigation*, through which it was necessary to pass, before reaching her presence. This forest consisted of all manner of tough and prickly shrubs; and was interspersed with broken ground, holes, and quagmires:—while, from above, it was overhung by an impenetrable cloud which excluded the light of heaven. The paths were twisted into a thousand crossings, turnings, and perplexities;—so that any one venturing in, without a guide, was sure to involve himself beyond all power of escape. To guard against this evil, many persons plied at the entrance, in wigs and long robes, proffering their services to all who had occasion to pass through the forest, and undertaking to conduct them to the throne of justice by the shortest and surest road. Some few of these, who had *diplomas* from the Goddess herself, appeared to fulfil their promise, as far as the natural difficulties of the path would allow. Others, who had possessed

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themselves of false certificates, issued by a power called *Chicanery*, led those who trusted them through the most crooked and dirty paths; by which, after long wandering, they came back to the very point from which they had set out, without having once caught a glimpse of the Goddess.

I must observe, however, in justice to the better sort of pilots, that the intricacy of the paths through this forest was in a great measure unavoidable, and arose from the nature of the journey. It was impossible for any two passengers to take exactly the same road, unless it chanced that the circumstances which brought them there were precisely similar; and, amidst the endless variety of human affairs, this seldom happened. It was the business of the better sort of the conductors to clear, and widen, and make straight, as many as possible of these approaches towards the judgment-seat, which were called the *Roads of Precedent*. Along these all passengers were led, the circumstances of whose case resembled former ones; and when this could be accomplished, the journey was short and easy. When the circumstances differed, the object was to get the passengers into tracts, as nearly parallel as possible to the great approaches; and these were termed the *Paths of Analogy*. The chief efforts and skill of the honest guides were applied to the finding out of these paths; which, by degrees, becoming more beaten and frequented, insensibly blended with the leading passages. In this way, as well as by the succession of fresh resort, the great approaches became more

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numerous and better known; and the practice of the law would thus have gradually tended to become shorter and simpler, had it not been for the multitude of new and dissimilar cases which were every day occurring.

On the other hand, the false conductors endeavoured to avoid all the straight and beaten paths, and to run the parties whom they led into the new tracts and channels of circumstances, each different from the rest. There being here no parallel roads, or other guide, by which to direct their path, they floundered about, without end or aim, and never made the slightest advance towards the Goddess.

Another hinderance, in approachiug the throne of Justice, arose from a multitude of turnpike gates placed on all the avenues, at which large tolls were collected. On coming to each of these, not only did the various conductors suddenly stop, and hold out their palms, by a sort of side motion, for a contribution;—but, at all of them, were seated certain lazy drones, who assisted neither the parties nor their conductors,—but, nevertheless, levied heavy imposts, under pretence that they swept and cleared the pathways. They declared themselves the servants of certain starch precise old maidens called FORMS, under whose cognizance, they averred, the approaches to Justice were placed. This pretence appeared to be in some sort true; for without the barriers and finger-posts put up by those ancient damsels, and the sweepings and dustings of their servants, the paths seemed in danger of being choked up, or getting into total confusion and

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perplexity. As far, therefore, as the cost was necessary to this end, it was not grudged; but the evil lay in the excessive number of these turnpikes and their keepers, and the extravagance of their charges, in proportion to their labour or use. Indeed, the aspect of these gateways was, to many of the passengers, so formidable,—and the approach to the tribunal so hopeless,—that they often paused, by mutual consent, in the middle of the labyrinth, and ended their dispute by tossing up a halfpenny.

While I was considering these things, I found myself jogged on the elbow by a little mean-looking man, whose face I knew to be that of a country attorney, who had formerly managed a suit for me. My half legal education had one effect somewhat different from the common, that it gave me a peculiar dislike of all personal engagement in the law. Once, however, I had been so shamefully cheated by a horse-dealer, that my better purpose was overcome, and I applied to this man to be what is called in Scotland my *Doer* in the cause; and truly he *did* me to some purpose. We kept six years vibrating before my worthy friend *Sheriff Pendulum* of our county, and afterwards six more in the Court of Session at Edinburgh; by which time the price of the beast being spent sixteen times over, both parties gave up, from sheer inanition. My attorney, however, now took occasion to enlarge on the goodness of my cause, and to hint that nothing but a little more *bottom* had been wanting on my part, to have insured success. In the mean time, he offered his services, to show me the

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innermost secrets of the labyrinth before us, whereof I had as yet only taken a general view.

The first entrance was surrounded by a maze of dwarfish shrubs, called the *Thicket of Preliminaries*, in which the parties strayed a long time before getting to what was termed the *Barrier of the Merits*, where they were allowed to enter on the matter of their cause. On passing the Barrier, they were ushered into a perplexed and boundless forest, called the *Wilderness of Pleadings*, where the very air was darkened and agitated with the flutter of papers; and the ear was stunned with the names of pleas, and counter-pleas, petitions, demurrers, representations, and replications; answers, replies, rejoinders, minutes, memorials, interpleaders, and multiplepoindings. The turnings, and stoppages, and zig-zag directions of the pathways through this region, baffle all description. I looked up, at every opening, for a distant glimpse of the Divinity whom we were in search of; but cannot say that I was so fortunate as to catch a peep even of the hem of her garment. After being detained a long while among the pleadings, we at length reached the great forge or work-shop of *Judgments*, from which I augured a speedy conclusion. In this I was, however, premature; for I beheld the parties bandied to and fro between opposite decisions, much in the way of a shuttlecock between two battledores. Sometimes they were shoved a little way forward,—then counterbuffed, and sent back;—now pushed to the right side,—now to the left;—sometimes turned fairly round,—and sometimes brought to a stand

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still. After all this exercitation, when they thought they were finally about to be dismissed, they were told that they had only yet gone the first part of their journey; and must prepare for the successive stages of *new trial, appeal,* and *remit,*—which still lay, in long *vista,* between them and the throne of the goddess. Others, not reserved for this further probation, were ushered through a gorge of the mountains into a black and hideous valley, called the DEN OF DISTRESSES. I took but a short peep into this dismal region, and heard nothing but the howling of a sullen wind, on which were borne the sounds of *capias's* and captions,—writs of extent, and *diem clausit extremum,*—arrests, and warrants *de meditatione fugæ.* In the distance, I beheld a catchpole and his familiars, surrounding a prison door. I shrunk with involuntary horror, and was flying I knew not whither, when I overheard the voice of my little attorney shouting from behind, and warning me to beware of the GULF of COSTS which lay in my way. On casting my eyes a little forward, I found myself on the brink of the yawning abyss, into which a few more steps would have plunged me headlong.

I had scarcely recovered this shock, when I heard a voice among the spectators commenting, in shrill and bitter tones, on all that was passing before us.—"What a scene," it cried, "of knavish abuse on the "one hand, and of dupery and suffering on the other? "And why should this be?—What occasions all this "perplexity, but the base interests and dishonest arts "of a profession (now become a trade) to which I am

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" ashamed of having belonged;—making dark and " intricate, what nature intended to be clear. All " this labyrinth of litigation is a mere creation of " men,—aye, and of knavish interested men,—to pre- " vent the natural approach to justice;—to enslave " and pillage their fellow-citizens. Nothing more " is necessary towards the ends of justice than a sim- " ple code of written laws,—short, and intelligible to " all. Where, then, would be the use of either law- " yer or attorney? Let parties who differ go before " the Judge, and each tell his own story. The Judge " then opens the code,—finds the rule;—applies it; " —and all is ended. This is the perfection of legal " administration. It is thus they do at Constan- " tinople, Bagdat, and such enlightened commu- " nities. They go before the Cadi; who hears the " parties, and decides on the spot. This I maintain " to be the *ne plus ultra*, the *beau ideal*, of Distri- " butive Justice."—On looking round, I recognised the speaker to be no other than my old splenetic friend JEREMY BENTHAM. " Mighty well," said I, shaking my head, " this is taking matters in the other extreme, " with a vengeance. But is there no avoiding the " *Scylla* of tortuous delay, without falling on the " *Charybdis* of crude and arbitrary dispatch? If all " our law is to be the story of the parties before an " unlearned discretionary Judge, had we not better " at once return to the woods,—resume our state of " nature, and our tails,—and then we shall have nei- " ther laws nor law-suits?

" No, let us dismiss the dream of unattainable

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" perfection and simplicity, which exist nowhere, and " can least of all exist in the complicated relations of " the law. Let us amend and simplify where we can, " but cautiously and practically. We shall thus do " substantial good; while vapouring theorists, wholly " unacquainted with the affairs of life, may preach for " ages their impracticable doctrines, without produ- " cing any real benefit to mankind."

" Those sneaking and knavish notions"—replied Jeremy with much heat;—But the voice awakened me:—And I found it to be that of my man John,—not prolonging the crabbed discussion of laws and codes,—in Jeremy's more crabbed style,—but conveying a silver-toned summons to dinner.

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## XLVIII. THE LAWYER'S STUDY.

Non nostrum est tantas componere Lites.
Hor.

LIFE has been compared to a warfare, and so has Love. The great teacher of the latter *Art* says, "*Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido.*" But there is a third species of conflict which methinks bears an analogy to the noble science of throat-cutting, closer than either Life or Love, and that is Law. A law-suit may be justly termed a *civil war*. Among nations, as there is unhappily no common judgment-seat to which parties can appeal, a difference soon ri-



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pens into a campaign; and the *ratio ultima* decides the question. In the ruder stages of society, it is pretty much the same with individuals. An old Baron, when any one questioned his right, clapt his hand on his sword, and said, "This is my charter." His antagonist acknowledged the same authority; so to it they went, and fairly fought it out. But it was not always for such substantial reasons that they fell to loggerheads. A fancied slight or insult,—a quarrel over their cups,—a dispute about a lady, a hawk, or a hound,—were all legitimate causes of war; and the fury and perseverance of the contest was generally in proportion to the slightness of its origin. Now, in all these particulars, and many more, where can there be a happier coincidence than between an ancient feud, and a modern law-suit? The same passions or interests give rise to both,—the same stratagems are employed,—the same anger, hope, and fear, excited,—the same pride of victory, and shame of defeat,—the same supplies wasted,—the same loss and ruin in the end. The only difference is in the weapons;—tongue and pen, instead of sword and pistol.

And as both of these modes of conflict have their pains, so they likewise have their pleasures. Wars, as well as law-suits, sometimes arise from the mere tedium of inaction, and desire of employment. The vicissitudes, hazards, pursuits, and escapes of both, delight the spirit of adventure, and find constant excitement for expectation and surprize. The original subject of contention,—often in itself insignificant,—is forgotten in the interest of the engagement;—and

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men continue to fight, and to litigate, from the mere pleasure of fighting and litigating. On the other hand, we sometimes, in both, see the combatants, after being heartily tired of the conflict, continue it for years, with a languid and sickly obstinacy, from the mere difficulty of coming amicably together, and the shame of first crying *enough!*

These waking reflections followed the sleeping scene unfolded in my last paper. After revolving them a while, I went to call on a friend, eminent at the bar,—not with the view of consulting him professionally (for I have already hinted my sacred horror of the *Forum*)—but to divert his mind, a few moments, from his labours, by easy conversation. The servant, on showing me into his study, said that he was then engaged in another room, but would be with me presently; and, in the mean time, left me a newspaper, by way of amusement. I thought this, however, an opportunity which might be better improved; and, forthwith, began to contemplate the scene around me. I first considered the mighty tomes, in parchment or leather, which were ranged above each other, from the floor to the ceiling; and fancied myself surrounded by a grave assembly in wigs, or gowns, with caps, or long beards;—the men who had spent their lives in giving birth to such ponderous labours. I next beheld the lighter troops of moderns, who,—conscious that the size of the carriage should correspond with the weight of the cargo,—had modestly shrunk into quartos and octavos. To these succeeded the still more hodiernal lucubrations, which were com-



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pressed within blue boards, or *fasciculi* of loose paper. From them I still descended another step, to printing without boards at all, which were pleadings before the courts of law. At length I reached the very base string of humility, in the shape of manuscripts, which were titled Duplies, Triplies, Quadruplies,—abbreviations, I presume, for double-lies, triple-lies, quadruple-lies, &c. And here (by a curious elective attraction, or appetency in my constitution,—a bump of *adhesiveness* which I leave craniologists to explain,) I ultimately fastened.

Among these manuscripts, I was caught by various bundles, exceedingly thumbed and ragged, which were thrust into shelves at the extreme corner of the room. Aware that modest worth is often thus discountenanced, I brought some of these to the table, and found that they were processes or suits which had come from the inferior courts before the Supreme Tribunal here. As it appeared to me that I might here open a page of human nature, as instructive as any in the library, I set myself to untie the bundles, and look into the contents of several of them.

The first which I happened upon was a dispute between Humphrey Clod, and Christopher Compost, two adjacent tenants of different *Lairds*, about the site or *stance* (as it was there called) of a dunghill. The subject in question was a bit of waste ground, of about forty yards square, lying on the boundary between their farms, whereupon each claimed the right of rearing his dunghill. On the one hand, Humphrey maintained that he and his *fore-*

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*bears* had laid their dirt there past memory of man. Christopher, on the contrary, contended for his superior right; and offered to prove an uninterrupted course of evacuation, on that very spot, for half a century. The Sheriff (before whom such matters come, in the first instance, in Scotland, as the ordinary provincial judicature,) had suggested that there was abundance of waste ground for both their dunghills: But this mode of compromise was rejected with disdain. There was then a long proof taken, wherein, as usual in such cases, one-half of the witnesses directly contradicted the other. The suit went on vigorously, for several years, between the tenants; —their respective landlords disdaining all unneighbourly disputes about such a trifle. At length, however, each tenant having severally taken his lord to the spot, and convinced him of his right,—they were both (after a correspondence, beginning civilly, but gradually sharpening towards the close,) sucked into the vortex. They have now been at it, tooth and nail, for some years more—(not, as they justly observe, for the value of the thing;—but only it is unpleasant to be taken advantage of, when one has plain justice on one's side);—have replied and rejoindered till the papers are almost as big as the dunghill;—have now brought it before the court at Edinburgh;—and, from being on old habits of family intimacy, are no longer on speaking terms.

The next was an action of damages for Breach of Promise of Marriage, brought by Jacob Snap, constable in the ancient and loyal burgh of *Eitherside*,

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against Miss Beatrice Fickle, a great heiress,—she being possessor of a house and garden, besides one hundred pounds, ready money, in the bank. It was set forth by Jacob, that after long and severe courtship,—in the course of which he had expended thirty shillings, and upwards, in treats and presents to the lady,—she had at last consented to make him happy: In contemplation of which event he had bought a new suit of clothes, bespoke a marriage-dinner, and incurred sundry other heavy charges; which were all thrown away, by reason of the lady's sudden change of mind. That for this change she could assign no sufficient cause; the same proceeding solely from levity and inconstancy of temper. Whereupon the complainant prayed not only for reimbursement of his outlays, but a *solatium* for the grief and discomposure of mind, and injury to his feelings, arising from the misconduct of the defendant aforesaid. Mrs Beatrice alleged in reply that Mr Jacob had at first demeaned himself with exemplary propriety; but of late had failed in those attentions due from a lover:—That, in particular, when she was confined with the colic, he had never called to inquire for her:—That when caught together in a shower, he had not so much as the civility to offer her his umbrella, whereby a new chip bonnet had been irretrievably injured (a damage which, it was submitted, might well be a set-off against that done the plaintiff's feelings:)—And, above all, that in walking in the fields with her and Miss Molly Mayflower, he had helped Miss Molly at a stile, and left the defendant

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to straddle over the best way she could. These circumstances of extenuation seemed to the Sheriff so strong that he had limited the damages to one shilling, and costs:—but Jacob, dissatisfied with this judgment, had brought the case before the Court of Session.

On opening the next bundle, I found it was an action at the instance of the Widow Waddle against Peter Pye-crust the baker, for forcibly shutting up her back door. It was alleged by Peter that the door belonged to a common passage between their houses;—that each had separate entry and egress;—that it was wholly useless, and only admitted cold and wet. All this the widow allowed, but stood upon her right;—complained bitterly of the oppression committed on a poor lone woman;—and vowed that if it cost her her last petticoat she would have justice. This being, as she thought, denied her by the Bailies of the Burgh, she came to seek it here.

The next was an action of damages for Defamation brought by Miss Cicely Cross-stitch, the milliner, against Mrs Midriff the butcher's wife, who had declared, in the hearing of divers credible witnesses, that Miss Cicely was *no better than she should be.* The suit had opened with long and learned pleadings on the import of the above proposition;—the defendant maintaining that it was no more than might be truly predicated of all man and womankind,—inasmuch as none was perfect, which all ought to be: while the plaintiff, on the contrary, insisted, that the phrase (according to its usual meaning and acceptation) con-

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veyed a most disparaging *innuendo* against her virtue; and of a nature (she being still in the single state) peculiarly injurious to her prospects of a good settlement for life. To this Mrs Midriff rejoined, that she could have no such ill meaning, inasmuch as she knew that Miss Cross-stich's mature time of life (she having been the defendant's senior at learning white-seam) exempted her from all suspicion of improper levities. The plaintiff however replied, with much bitterness, that this defence was false and calumnious, and only aggravated the original slander: That it was well known that she (the plaintiff) was still in the flower of her life, and had a variety of suitors (particularly Mr Lotion the apothecary, and Mr Grains the brewer), all of whom had been cooled and slackened in their advances by the aforesaid calumny. The Commissary Court, after long proofs and pleadings, ordered Mrs Midriff to pronounce a *palinode* or recantation of the scandal, in presence of a Tea-party, to be invited by the plaintiff;—besides finding her liable in Five pounds damages, which Miss Cross-stitch very handsomely agreed to take, in prime beef, from the defendant's stall. With this, however, the man of marrow-bones and his lady were not satisfied, and now sought redress before the supreme court.

The case which I next unfolded came from one of the lofty mansions of this our metropolitan city. Laurence Lovesuit, the occupant of an inferior story or flat, insisted to have egress by a window in the attic, for the purpose of sweeping his chimney. This was pertinaciously resisted by Solomon Skylight, the pro-

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prietor of said attic, who declared that he would have no such rummaging over his head. And on this knotty question they had combated for several years. At length the Judge, going to inspect the premises, said he remembered the house, and had an impression that there was a written obligation by the proprietor of the attic, to allow this right of egress to the owners of the floors below. "Your lordship is quite right," said Mr Lovesuit, with a complimentary smile, "I "have in my possession, the very obligation you "speak of."—"And in the name of wonder," exclaimed his lordship, "why did you not produce "it?"—"Why really, my lord," rejoined Laurence, "it was so pretty a point of law, that I wished to "have it tried on its own merits."—"I wish," said his lordship, "from the bottom of my soul, that I could "give the cause against you for your folly,—but you "shall at least pay the costs." This was an unlucky act of justice,—for it has afforded to the pertinacious plaintiff a fresh ground of litigation longer than the first.

The last case I had time to examine was also from the lofty purlieus of our city. Timothy Spruce, in walking along the streets, was saluted by an inundation from a window, nine stories high, to the grievous disparagement of his person, and injury of his clothes; —the case being aggravated by this circumstance, that he was, at the time, proceeding in dress to a Tea-party, which he was obliged wholly to relinquish. He furthermore stated that he was forced to keep his chamber for three days,—airing himself under a cross draught of open windows,—before he recovered such

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an odour as to venture under the nose of society:—And even after that time, he could discover, from certain twitchings and contortions in the features of his friends, that there was still something unsavoury about him. For all which, and the value of his clothes, he claimed damages. The defendant, Mrs Deborah Notable, set forth that she had always been famed for keeping her house in the highest order and cleanliness:—That she had used the undoubted privilege of her ancestors in this city; and had given the proper warning cry of *gardy-loo*, which the plaintiff had neglected. She protested against all police acts, and other modern innovations, as showing a degeneracy from the strong nerves, and noble spirit of our forefathers, and manifestly tending to the ruin of Scotland. Notwithstanding this defence, the Magistrates of the City had found her liable for the value of the plaintiff's clothes, besides a fine to the police. But she avowed her resolution to fight to her last shilling, and persist in her usage of projectile irrigation, according to the undoubted privilege of a Caledonian.

My friend here entered, and smiled at the occupation in which he found me engaged.—"You see," said he, "in what cares and studies I am doomed to pass my days."—"All trades must live," returned I, "and I am compelled to say, from what I can perceive of the subjects of contest, that your clients have more regard for your interest than their own."—"Why," replied he, "to men of my profession human nature does not show under the most engaging aspect. Yet, though knavery is often too apparent, passion and

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folly make up the staple. Such is the blindness of self-love, and so ingenious its disguises, that disputants at law generally see nothing wrong on their own side, and nothing right on their adversary's. What you have been reading, I observe, relates to the humbler order of litigants, who are possessed by the pure spirit of litigiousness more strongly than their superiors; inasmuch as in the former it partakes more of passion, and less of calculation. They also feel an occupation and importance in the notice and bustle of a law-suit, to which they are little accustomed. In short, after all complaints of the law's vexation and delay, those evils often arise less from the procrastination of judges, or the arts of lawyers, than from the sheer obstinacy of the parties themselves."

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## XLIX. INTERVIEW WITH DEATH.

Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres.

Hor.

When I was abroad, I picked up a set of the prints taken after the designs of Holbein's famous *Dance of Death*. In rummaging through some old portfolios, a few days ago, I found these, and amused myself in contemplating the various fantastic shapes and attitudes into which the artist has thrown that ghastly figure. With my mind full of this strange subject, I dropped asleep at my fireside; when methought

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the door of the room opened, and the *Grim Feature* I had been considering entered, *in propria persona*. Though somewhat startled by this apparition, I did not feel so much disturbance as might have been expected. He advanced towards me with a courteous air, (as far as such an air could be assumed by such a figure,) and laying aside his lance and hour-glass, quietly seated himself on the other side of the table.

As I shrunk back a little from so familiar an approach;—"Be not alarmed," said he, "I merely called to inquire whether the world was mending under your moral discipline. You must look on me as one of your best coadjutors; and, on the other hand, the greater your success, the less will your fellow-mortals be afraid of me. But, in the first place, to show some title to your confidence, I will begin by giving you a little of mine. I have been lately making my usual rounds in this metropolis, and will tell you what reception I have met with among some of your disciples.

"The first I called upon was Mr Justice Gulpit, one of the quorum, who has, to my knowledge, washed down a good dinner with a good bottle of wine, as regularly as the day came round, any time these thirty years. He seemed very much surprised at my visit. 'Good Heaven!' exclaimed he, 'what can have 'brought you here, Mr —a——, your name is quite 'familiar to me, sir, but really at present I cannot; '—In the undertaker line, I think;—But indeed, 'sir, I am in perfect health;—much obliged to you, 'though, for your attention;—quite a young man yet; '—led a regular life;—never had an ailment, but a

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'slight vertigo in the head, or so, merely proceeding 'from flatulency:—And, besides, I am going to Har- 'rowgate next month, to make all clear; and am de- 'termined to live quite on the starving system for the 'future. You must have mistaken this door for my 'neighbour Mr Wheesy's, who has been ready to go 'off with an asthma these ten years:—poor man, life 'must be a mere burden to him:—Believe me, sir, I 'mean to be quite strict and abstemious:—My ser- 'vant, sir, will shew you the way:—Here, John, shew 'the gentleman Mr Wheesy's door:—there has been 'a small mistake:—quite abstemious indeed, sir:"— With that he fairly bowed me out of the room: and the poor soul did look so hearty and life-like, that I resolved to give him a respite on good behaviour. Well, sir:—He went to Harrowgate;—purged and lived low for three weeks;—and considered that this exertion gave him a title to indulgence for the whole of his life to come. So he gradually resumed his old ways, through the stages of a glass,—half a pint,—a pint,—a bottle;—always expatiating on his efforts at Harrowgate,—and remarking, that no sacrifice was too great to purchase health.—At length, finding how things went, I called at the end of another month, and brought him with me.

"My next visit was to the Rev. Dr Finewit, who has been so much admired for his eloquent discourses on the miseries of life, and the nothingness of all human enjoyment. Here, at least, thought I to myself, I shall find one willing follower. He will be happy to leave a scene which he has painted in such

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gloomy colours. The Doctor entered into a long argument with me;—stated his perfect readiness, so far as concerned himself;—but really his regard for his flock;—the loss mankind would sustain;—and so forth. I could not resist all this eloquence, so I gave the Doctor a further indulgence. He was accordingly restored next Sunday to his admiring auditory; and took occasion to enlarge on his misfortune in being forced to breathe a little longer in this evil world.

"I now approached the spacious mansion of my Lord Marquis of Veteralto. I found the ground-floor thronged with footmen lounging about in rich liveries, some playing at cards, others eating and drinking. As I trod the marble stair-cases, and gilded corridors, I saw others stationed to transmit successive notices from the physicians to inquirers at the door, who rattled up in their chariots with much the same feelings as to the next toy-shop, or auction. On entering the state bed-chamber, I found the ancient peer stretched almost insensible, surrounded with splendid curtains, rich furniture, and family pictures. A cup of gruel stood near the bed-side; but, amidst all his luxury, even this simple food his stomach rejected. The only light was from a single taper on the chimney-piece, which dimly shewed the large and gloomy apartment. A Doctor half asleep reclined in one arm-chair. A sick-nurse whole asleep nodded in another. While, in a corner of the room, his Lordship's nephew and heir stood in earnest conversation with a grave solemn looking person. 'Mr Sable,' said he, 'I 'would have the Escutcheon handsome,—gold tears

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'and emblazonry;—and remember the arms of pre-'tence,—Three Black-a-moors proper, you know;—'and the Boar's Head in a field azure. I would wish 'to pay all proper honour to my dear respected:—I 'believe you may have it ready by Thursday, Mr Sa-'ble.'—I could not think of disappointing all this considerate preparation; so I did my office, and transferred the coronet from the old peer to the new one.

"From this I went to a low house, in a narrow lane, belonging to a little grocer. I was led to the bed-room of the sick man, by the noise of many tongues, which were those of the relations wrangling about his will. In this they were so deeply engaged, that none perceived the completion of my work, till some time after it was over. When at last they discovered this, there was a sudden calm;—handkerchiefs and sobs were brought out;—and exclamations were heard of—'a 'good man,—a good pious man,—the poor have lost a 'real friend,—but he is happy.'—Something was at last said of sealing up the repositories, when off they all crowded, leaving me alone with my prize.

"My next scene was amidst the roar of gaiety and intemperance. I found a party sitting over their wine, one of whom had fallen down in a fit of apoplexy. As he still breathed, his friends around him began to lay bets whether he would live or die. The odds rose and fell, with the usual spirit, as the poor man sunk or revived; till one, less engaged than the rest, proposed sending for a surgeon. 'By no means!' —exclaimed the general voice,—'quite against all 'rule:—no such thing ever heard of at Epsom or

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" Newmarket:—no, no, let Nature do her own work ; " —fair play's a jewel."—In the midst of the altercation, I settled the bet, by whipping off my prey.

" The next visit I paid was at the fashionable mansion of my Lady Flutter, whom I found in full dress, just going to a ball. She was a good deal startled at my appearance, and asked, in a faltering voice, what I wanted. ' You, madam,' said I, somewhat gruffly, ' if you do not mend your manners.'— ' Bless me, sir,' replied she, ' what can you mean ? ' I only live like other women of fashion.—And then ' I am fully engaged abroad for many weeks to come ; ' —besides evenings twice a week at home.—Really, ' sir, I cannot think of attending you at present :—If ' you had come, indeed, at the dull season in the ' country, when one is already half dead of *Ennui*'— ' Madam,' said I, ' I come at present only as a ' warning, but beware of my next visit."—She was so heartily frightened that she actually staid at home that night, sent for the great family bible, and read three whole chapters to her waiting maid. Nay, she proposed forbidding her card party next night; but finding herself pretty well when she waked in the morning, she thought that, to save trouble, it might as well go on.

" From this adventure I went to pay my respects to Doctor Virus, the great physician. It is impossible to describe the surprise and indignation of the Doctor, on my announcing that it was for him I called. He regarded me not only as an unfaithful partner in trade, but as a rebellious subject, whom he of-



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ten boasted of having reduced to his bidding.—'What!' said he, 'is this the gratitude you shew 'for all I have done for you?—for all the prey I have 'catered for your filthy maw?—Whose drop and 'whose pill was it that made such despatch last win-'ter?—Who was it that purged my Lady Scower-'well into a dysentery?—Who took off Provost 'Broadbottom in the spring influenza?—Who bled 'the widow Vermilion into a dropsy, that carried her 'after her husband in three months? But I will 'teach you better manners. I will shew you that I 'can kill or cure, as likes me best, without your 'scurvy leave. With this my original, infallible, pa-'tent elixir, I defy you.'—Upon this, he raised the nostrum to his lips, and devoutly swallowed the whole phial, till his eyes were turned towards the ceiling. But here, watching my advantage, in the under parts being left exposed, I launched my shaft at his great round belly, and tumbled him over.

"I now slipped up three pair of stairs, into a wretched cabin, where I found an old man of eighty-four years, bedrid, and almost blind. He was exhausted to a shadow, had lost all appetite, and was so weak that he could not stir a limb without assistance. He had survived all his natural relations, and the strangers around him afforded their mercenary aid carelessly and impatiently. They were worn out by their long attendance, and eager to get rid of him.—'Well, old friend,' said I, 'you have had a long 'lease of life, and seem to be a mature fruit, ready to 'fall. I suppose you are quite willing to come with



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'me.'—'And who are you?' replied he.—'Why,' returned I, 'I have been at your elbow any time 'these ten years;—Do you not know me yet?—I 'believe it is time for you to think of dying.'—'Dy-'ing!' retorted he, 'what do you mean?—You can't 'be serious. Why, I am yet in the full enjoyment 'of my faculties, and the pleasures of the world. I 'propose trying a new business, in the commission 'line, next winter. My friends would break their 'hearts to part with me. There's my neighbour 'Pinch, the snuffman: Why he is six good months 'older than I am at the least: I remember, before 'I was well past my letters, he was in the running 'hand.—No, no, it is out of all reason that I should 'go before him.'—'Wretched old creature!' said I, stopping his breath.

"I had scarcely brought off this unwilling prize, when I found myself suddenly called where I had no thought of going. It was by the report of a pistol, which had been discharged through his own heart by a young man of three and twenty,—beautiful in his person,—of high station and prospects,—and surrounded by all the objects of worldly desire and enjoyment. On contrasting this case with the former, I could only exclaim,—'Alas! poor human nature!'

"I received another summons of the same kind soon after, which surprised me still more. It was to old Hardfist the usurer, who had been driven to despair by the loss of *a hundred pounds*, on bad security. In vain it was urged to him that he was worth a plum;—was adding to it every day;—and that so

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small a loss would never be felt in such a heap.—'Ah!' said he, 'whatever I may gain, I am still this hun-'dred pounds the poorer. No, I never can make this 'up, make what I will.'—On which most logical deduction he proceeded to noose himself to his bed-post, to the great joy of all his friends and acquaintance.

"By way of counterpart to those volunteers, my next acquisition cost me some trouble. It was an ancient valetudinarian bachelor, who, as nobody cared a farthing for him, made amends by a most reverend care of himself. After exhausting the art and patience of all the Faculty here, he had recourse to those of Bath and London. He tried all remedies that were ever heard of. Had nostrums and specifics brought from every quarter of the globe:—Used milk baths, hop pillows, and stews of nightingale's livers: nay, bribed a young fellow to be bleeded, to transfuse new vigour into his languid veins. He then sought a change of climate, and led me a weary dance through Europe, to Madeira, and the West Indies. In spite of all his doublings, however, I kept him in view, and nailed him, on his return, in the chops of the Channel.

"My next visit was to a little attorney, whom I found bent over his writing desk, and surrounded with papers and parchments. He was engaged in making out the latter will of a superannuated dowager; where he had quietly slipped in his own name, instead of that designed by the testator. It was late at night. A single candle burning on the table before him. I advanced the point of my dart over his shoulder, and



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shook it gently. The light glancing on it caught his notice, and slowly turning his head, he followed the weapon with his eye, till it rested on my figure, on which he gazed with open mouth, bristling hairs, and a fixed look of horror and consternation. I then pointed to the fire. He understood my meaning, as if by instinct, and, with a motion almost involuntary, folding up the paper, thrust it between the bars. I waited till I saw it entirely consumed; and then, satisfied with the briskness of my dose for the present, I gave him a significant nod, and quitted the room.

"It would be tedious to enumerate all the scenes I have lately witnessed, or the various excuses I received from those whom I visited. Mr Invoice, the great merchant, told me that it would be particularly inconvenient for him to go off before the arrival of the spring fleets. Old Bonus, the stock-jobber, declared that he had made up his mind to sell out, and settle his affairs, whenever there was a rise of four per cent., and then he would have nothing to do but prepare for me. But as he had put me off the same way half a dozen times before, I turned a deaf ear to him. A country gentleman entreated for indulgence till he had built his park wall; a retail shopkeeper, till he had settled his son in business; and an antiquary, till he had finished his Essay on a Greek Sarcophagus, 'which, you know, sir,' added he, with an insinuating smile, 'is quite in your way.' A fat pursy trader, who had been scraping and toiling all his days, without either wife or child, complained bitterly of being summoned off, just when he was beginning to enjoy himself. In

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short, the only person that received me with decency was a poor Turk, who had wandered to this city. I found him seated on the ground, smoking his pipe with the gravity of his nation; and on mentioning my errand,—'What,' said he, 'is my hour come?—'Well! Allah and the prophet have decreed it. Let 'me knock the ashes out of my pipe, and I am 'ready.'

My strange companion here made a pause in his narrative. I had been so much engaged by the foregoing detail, that I had, in some measure, grown reconciled to his appearance. But, at this part of his harangue, suddenly addressing me, he said,—'And 'now, Mr Keeper, supposing I were to make the 'same proposal to you, what would you say?'—'O, 'my good sir,' replied I, 'you know the case is quite 'different;—not that I have any reason,—but you 'must be sensible'—In short, with all my philosophy, I was so much disconcerted with this abrupt interrogation, that I awoke; and not liking the prints, which were still lying on the table, so well as I did before, I huddled them into the portfolio, and locked them up

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## L. HAPPINESS OF THE LOWER ANIMALS.

Frondiferasque novis Avibus canere undique silvas:
Hinc fessæ Pecudes pingues per pabula læta
Corpora deponunt: et candens lacteus humor
Uberibus manat distentis: hinc nova proles,
Artubus infirmis, teneras lasciva per herbas
Ludit. LUCRET.

Thus then to man the voice of Nature spake:
Go, from the Creatures thy instruction take:
Learn from the Birds what food the thickets yield;
Learn from the Beasts the physic of the field.
POPE.

The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
For human fellowship, as being void
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike
To Love and Friendship both, that is not pleased
With sight of animals enjoying life,
Nor feels their happiness augment his own.
COWPER.

I DO not at present propose to embark in an inquiry into the origin and existence of Evil, that most painful and puzzling question which can engage the human mind. With regard to our own rational and accountable race, there are two circumstances which seem to justify the permission of suffering;—the one is, that being guilty, we deserve it;—the other, that being capable of moral improvement, we may amend by it. But neither of these reasons apply to the sufferings of the lower orders of creation, which are alike incapable of moral delinquency and improvement. While this is probably the cause that Providence has dealt to them, in the ordinary course of things, more enjoyment, and

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less pain, than fall to the lot of man; it should, methinks, be a strong incitement to us to imitate this benevolent plan, and spare them, as far as we can, all unnecessary distress. It is needless to add how much is in our power in this way, or how large a proportion of their suffering arises from the negligence or wilful cruelty of man.

I have said that, in the usual course of nature, the lower animals enjoy more happiness than we; and I think that a fair estimate of our relative conditions will confirm this truth. In the first place, on the score of bodily health, there is no room for dispute. Unless from violent accident, the inferior creatures seldom feel any disturbance of the animal functions. Besides freedom from positive pain, the healthy tone and action of the whole system must yield them a substantive pleasure in the possession of life, activity, and the indulgence of the natural appetites, which is scarcely felt by the human race, except in its first rude and savage state. This feeling it must be, which gives to the young of the brute creation that buoyancy and playfulness of spirits, which it is so delightful to behold; and which often continues past the season of youth.

If we consider, again, the pains and pleasures which spring from the mind, it will be found, I suspect, that we have still less reason to congratulate ourselves on the comparison. That we possess more sources of mental enjoyment than the inferior animals may be true; but this is balanced by so heavy a counterpoise of suffering as greatly turns the scale. The only

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form of mental distress which they seem to endure is the fear of immediate bodily harm, which comes but seldom, and is soon forgotten;—and perhaps occasional grief for the loss of their young, which is still more rare. It is needless to say how different is the case with us. How much we suffer from present fears and sorrows; and with what a fatal readiness we recall past, and anticipate future, evil. Not to mention that most awful visitation of humanity by which the powers of thought itself are unhinged, and the fictions of a morbid imagination are awakened in all their accumulated and exalted horrors;—the fear of death alone, which engrosses so much of our thoughts,—and from which the lower animals are free,—would be enough to make out our excess in suffering. Add to this, some of the most common causes of distress, from the loss of friends,—the disappointment of hopes,—the injustice, or neglect, or unkindness of others,—the anxiety about worldly circumstances,—the pangs of self-reproach,—the forfeiting our place in the public regard,—and we shall be sensible how large and peculiar is the class of evils which we endure, beyond what falls to the lot of our lower brethren of the creation.

That this provision of Nature is reasonable in itself I have already said: and we are bound in justice, as far as in us lies, to promote her designs. There is surely something most untoward in a disposition which can give pain to creatures incapable of ill desert;—which were made for our assistance, and intrusted to our care. On few subjects can genius and feeling appear with more grace than in expressing a

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sympathy with their happiness. The amiable Cowper, whose benevolence overflowed on all sentient nature, has touched on this topic with the usual charm of his genius, in a passage immediately following the motto prefixed to this paper, but too long for insertion. The strong and luminous mind of Paley has had few opportunities, in the course of his speculations, of introducing such matters of sentiment; but there is nothing more graceful, and even eloquent, in his writings, than the following passage, when noticing, among the wise adaptations of nature, that between night and sleep:—"But it is not for man, either "solely or principally, that night is made. Inferior "but less perverted creatures taste its solace, and ex- "pect its return, with greater exactness and advantage "than he does. I have often observed, and never ob- "served but to admire, the satisfaction, no less than "the regularity, with which the greatest part of the "irrational world yield to this soft necessity, this "grateful vicissitude. How comfortably the birds of "the air address themselves to the repose of the even- "ing; with what alertness they resume the activity "of the day."

It seems to me, therefore, a very essential part of education to instil into young minds a sympathy with the enjoyments and sufferings of the lower animals, and a horror at all cruelty towards them. Children are naturally disposed to distress and torture those creatures, from the simple desire of occupation, and of exercising power, without any wish to inflict pain. They merely never think about it, and require to have

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their sympathy aroused by being reminded to make the case their own. When taking a ride, one day last summer, in the neighbourhood of this city, I came upon a small house and pleasure ground, the neatness of which drew my attention. Near the road was a paddock enclosed by a low fence, and embowered in trees, within which I heard the voices of children, as I supposed at play. They were then hidden by the thick foliage, and I was coming up with all those pleasant anticipations which the sportiveness of that age inspires, when I discovered their occupation to be that of hanging a young dog over the branch of a tree. It was the middle of summer,—the sun at height of noon,—while the leaves hung so richly round this little spot, that his beams scarcely struggled through, and formed a cool and verdant light underneath. The air, tempered by this gloom, came upon me with a reviving fragrance. Amidst all this repose and felicity of nature, which courted every sense to pleasure, and which so well harmonized with the innocent looks of the children before me,—how painful and shocking was the contrast of the business in which they were engaged. It seemed as if the office of tormenting had been transferred to Heaven, and assigned to Angels. The unhappy creature which they had suspended was writhing in the laborious struggles and agonies of death:—while they looked on in amazement, as if half-terrified at what they had done. I immediately dismounted, and entering the paddock by a small door, entwined with honeysuckle, I hastened up to the tree, and relieved

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the wretched victim. Then, turning to the little ones, who were a good deal confounded at my appearance, I asked them, in a stern and solemn voice,—holding the dog in my arms, where the poor thing lay cowering and licking my hand,—how any of them would like to be so treated. I added a rebuke so serious that some of them burst into tears; and I much mistake if it did not leave an impression for the rest of their lives. I then carried the dog to the house, where I met coming out the mother of some of the young delinquents. She took my interference in good part;—said that it had been a prank of pure thoughtless mischief;—and promised to enforce my admonitions by her maternal authority.

There are persons less excusable, and of a larger growth, who inflict on the inferior animals the most prolonged and excruciating tortures, in what they are pleased to term the pursuits of science. Experiments are made on dogs and cats, rabbits, fowls, frogs, and insects, which subject them to the greatest sufferings, merely to elucidate some property of matter, or conjecture in natural history. This seems to me a very questionable exercise of the power committed to us by Providence, as lords of the creation, and should be confined within the narrowest limits, and to the most important subjects.

There are others who carry so far their scruples in the opposite extreme, as to doubt the lawfulness of using animal food,—of sacrificing the lives of other creatures for the support of our own. On this subject,

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I can have as little difficulty as on the former. The use of the lower animals as food, seems to be lawful and proper, on this simple ground, that, on the whole, it conduces to their advantage. The chief enjoyments which they can partake of are health, tendance, and the indulgence of their natural appetites; and almost the only evils which they suffer are the opposites of these. Now, it is plain that the attentions which we bestow in rearing them for our food, in the articles of pasture, shelter, and protection, are much beyond what they would receive, had we no such end in view. Death,—when inflicted instantly, and with the least possible suffering,—is a far less evil to them than the infirmities of old age, or the pursuit of carnivorous animals; to which they would be exposed had we no interest to protect them. The declining age of the horse is surely more to be pitied than the early fate of the steer.

But further, a little reflection must satisfy us, that if we did not rear and protect the inferior animals for our food, they would in time be greatly diminished in numbers,—and indeed wholly banished from the earth: for we never would allow land to remain in pasture from the mere benevolent purpose of feeding them;—but would turn it to the raising of produce for our own support. We should thus, no doubt, increase the numbers of our own species; but it would be at the risk of dreadful suffering from famine, on any failure of the earth's supplies;—for we should then have no resource to fall back upon, by diminish-

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ing the consumption of the lower animals, and turning to our own support the produce formerly applied to theirs: For those animals,—while they lessen our food in seasons of plenty, when we do not want it,—by a reflex operation, increase it in scarcity, when we do. It is this disproportionate number of the human race which renders the calamity of famine so fatal in China, and other countries of the East. It would seem, therefore, that abstinence from using the lower animals as food, would conduce neither to their advantage nor to our own.

On the chapter of Field Sports, again, I had half prepared a lofty peroration, denouncing them as the pastime of demons, when I recollected the pleasure with which, in former years, I had pursued the feathered tribes;—or wandered down a trouting stream, with rod in hand, basket on back, and old Izaak Walton in pocket;—"casting away all care" (as he expresses it), and forgetting, in his delightful pictures of innocence, contentment, and rural repose, the cruel subject with which they are associated. I therefore, on due consideration, gave up my purpose: and at length acquiesced in this conclusion, that the *Wild* creation, like the *Tame*, may be lawfully destroyed for our use, if this be done without wanton excess of slaughter, or the infliction of unnecessary pain:—that there is an *animal* as well as an *intellectual* part of our nature, both of which require their gratification:—that these sports conduce to health, and the love of a country life:—and, to sum up all, that we may rest on the doctrine of our native poet Armstrong,

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> Formed on the Samian school, or those of Ind,
> There are who think these pastimes scarce humane:
> Yet in my mind,—and not relentless I, ——
> His life is pure that wears no fouler stain.

But to return to the treatment of the inferior animals while alive, I must confess, for my own part, that I am a cherisher of all feathered and four-footed creatures; nor do I look with any horror or unkindness even on those whose feet may amount to fifty or a hundred. I am far from approving of that passion for *pets* which leads some ladies to prefer a lap-dog or a monkey to their own children; nor do I even recommend the example of a certain worthy gentleman of this city who was wont to make a bedfellow of his favourite pig. But, within the bounds of moderation, the propensity is harmless, and even amiable. Who does not love Cowper the better for his tame hare? —or has not by heart the beautiful passage which describes it?

I am not ashamed to own that I entertain one or two inmates of the irrational creation, which share my own and my good sister's kind offices. In particular, I am master of a most amiable Cat, which I love as tenderly as ever Montaigne did his. Indeed, I design one day to come forth with a set discourse in behalf of that persecuted race. The truth is, that it happens here as in other persecutions, that the oppressors give themselves no trouble to study the merits of the oppressed; but justify their own cruelty by an ill name. This animal is not to be compared to the dog, either in intelligence, or in the fascination

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and familiarity of its manners; but there is something in the quiet, cleanly, unpretending habits of poor grimalkin, which I find extremely engaging. Then the sportiveness of the kitten is at once so cheerful, and so comic, that I know not any gloom or gravity which can withstand it. My favourite would find little honour in the eyes of a good housewife, for she abhors the sight of a mouse, and lives on a diet strictly Pythagorean. She generally sits at my elbow, while engaged in these my lucubrations; watches gravely the motion of the pen, which she considers as a trick performed for her amusement; and now and then puts forth her paw to touch it. Sometimes, when she thinks I am not paying her sufficient attention, she walks over the paper on which I am writing, and calmly lies down on it, while I am in the heat of one of my best thoughts; and here I must, perforce, await her leisure, for she is on no account to be disturbed. To an accident of this kind I warn my readers to impute any coldness or imperfect finishing which they may find in my composition. Nay, it has happened that the day's speculation has, more than once, been on the brink of disappointment, the printer's boy being obliged to wait till puss chose to move from her post.

But when once engaged in this seducing theme, I know not where to stop. Let me therefore sum up the perfections of my favourite, by quoting in her praise that flower of classical and college puns, MICAT INTER OMNES.

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## LI. VISIT TO NEWGATE—ABEL GREENE.

Heu miserande puer! si qua fata aspera rumpas ———.
VIRG.

WHATEVER may be the sins of the present day, I do not think that inattention to the wants and interests of the less-favoured ranks in society is one of them. If we consider the polite authors of antiquity, or those of modern times before the present age, we shall find little notice taken of those classes, and less sympathy expressed in their cares or fortunes. Among the ancients, indeed, the usage of domestic slavery degraded the inferior orders in estimation, as well as in worth, and froze up every sentiment of a common nature towards them. But even among the moderns, after that odious institution was abolished, the tendency of opinion and feeling seems to have been somewhat aristocratic, if we may judge from the literature of the two last centuries. The entire neglect, or slighting and contemptuous notice, of the lower class of people, which we there find, seem to imply that they held but a small place in the regard of their superiors.

In no country was the importance of this class ever more fully acknowledged than in this island, at the present day:—In none were they ever more thought, and spoken, and written about: In none was there ever more serious concern for their welfare, or real kindness towards their class and condition;—more schemes



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to assist, instruct, and relieve them. If the country of our trans-atlantic brethren be named, as one where the lower orders appear in still greater advancement, I answer,—Let them look to their domestic slavery;—Let them reckon how large a part of their population is not only debased below all respect,—but driven with stripes and chains,—sold at a stall,—and advertised for like strayed bullocks:—And let them then have the grace to retire from the competition. For my part, I cannot comprehend, how those who allow of such a practice in their families and homes, dare open their lips to pronounce the sacred name of Liberty. *

The proscription and exclusion enforced against people of colour, by the public opinion, is but one degree less cruel than domestic slavery, and this, it appears, pervades the whole Union.

Whether the above exertions in this country, in behalf of the humbler classes of society, have been met by corresponding gratitude and contentment on their part, is another question. It unfortunately so happens, that the very education bestowed upon them is turned into an instrument of evil. The misleaders of the press persuade them that their inevitable privations arise from the oppression of their superiors; and that they are themselves qualified to remove the

* We have lately had four works, of great merit, upon the manners and usages of the Americans: Mrs Trollope's, Capt. Basil Hall's, Mr Hamilton's, and Mr Stuart's. Of these, the last, which is a professed defence and panegyric of the Americans, gives by far the most revolting picture of the state of slavery in the Southern Provinces.



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evils of their lot, by amending civil institutions;—a task, for which they must ever remain unfit,—by education, by habits, by incessant occupation, by mere numbers. Thus, instead of the modesty of solid improvement, they are filled with the presumption of half-learned conceit; which, while it fancies itself all-sufficient, is the mere dupe of its interested flatterers.

These are great evils; but they ought not to lead to a despair of doing good. Benefits,—however misused or misconstrued for a time,—will, in the end, (let us trust), yield their proper fruit, of happiness in the receiver, thankfulness towards the giver, and the general improvement of all.

It is, however, indispensable that even benevolence should be under the control of discretion. Of this, all will be sensible who reflect how much evil has been done, in this world, with the intention of doing good. There is no subject, to which the public regard for the lower classes has been of late more directed, than the regulation and amendment of Hospitals and Prisons. Much that has been done is useful; and much that is truly useful still remains to do. But there is, in some quarters, an extravagant and Utopian expectation, which no reasonable performance will satisfy;—which can scarcely be realized in any system of general use;—and which, if it could, would, I fear, fail of the expected benefit.

To such persons my opinion on this subject may not be very palatable, but I will announce it explicitly nevertheless. It is, that a prison ought to be a place of discomfort and punishment to those within, and of

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terror to those without: That the labour performed should be severe and distasteful: And that the average living and accommodation should be a good way below that which the honest labouring poor enjoy in their own houses. No one rejoices more than I do at the improvement which is now going on, through all our island, in the form and construction of our prisons; —particularly for the comfort of civil debtors, and those committed for crime, previous to trial. But many of the advocates of improvement seem to be rather romantic and insatiable in their desires; and will be content with nothing short of accommodations for those confined, superior to what they ever enjoyed when free. I believe that this error has been so far committed, in one or two cases, as to have led to the repetition of petty crimes, for the very purpose of obtaining, in prisons or bridewells, better food and lodging than the parties could command elsewhere.

Accordingly, when, on visiting such establishments, we see comfortable dry rooms, each containing from twelve to twenty individuals; with spacious airing grounds attached, where they may enjoy exercise and sport; we are apt to ask ourselves,—" Is this punishment?—Here are gratified the strongest appetites of human nature,—food, sleep, and shelter, idleness, and society;—with enough of exercise to support health and appetite. Considering the former discomforts and labours of those people at home, they probably feel that they have made no bad exchange in coming here."

With us in Scotland the necessity of good accom-



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modation, even for civil debtors, is the less urgent, that, by the beautiful and simple institution of the *cessio bonorum*, (that *flebile remedium* of the Roman law, which our English neighbours seem unable to mould so harmoniously into their practice,) no honest debtor can be kept in prison beyond a month;—and, if his health suffer, not even so long. By our law too, every creditor is bound, either to support his imprisoned debtor, when in want, or to set him free;—an obligation which prevents rigorous and unnecessary confinement.

I have read with pleasure Mr Buxton's book on the improvement of the structure and discipline of prisons; and can duly esteem that active, patient, and heroic benevolence, which braved such horrors, and achieved such wonders, in the cause of humanity;—which investigated through every danger, and disgust, and discouragement;—and amended where amendment seemed past all hope. Many evils are unfolded by Mr Buxton, which demand and admit of remedy; and many suggestions are made of real and practical improvement. But with regard to some of his proposals I entertain a doubt.

His great project seems to be the reformation of the guilty, by means of regular and easy employment. In as far as this applies to the young,—or to the furnishing artizans with the tools of their respective trades, to work in solitude,—some benefit may arise, without any weighty objection;—although we must always be doubtful of general results to be expected from the success of a few instances. But the views

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of Mr Buxton, and his fellow-labourers, proceed much farther; and recommend the establishment of extensive manufactories in every jail, where the prisoners are to be taught and regularly employed to work at handicrafts,—in the same way as they would be by a master-manufacturer without. The examples of this, which he proposes for our imitation, are the *Maison de Force* at Ghent, and the *Penitentiary House* at Philadelphia, where prisoners are kept in great comfort, and are employed at extensive manufactories, in the exercise of ordinary labour. In America is also enforced strict silence during their work,—and that by a pretty severe corporal discipline. . . . . .

Now, the objections which I have to this system are twofold. *First*, Like all forced establishments of industry, not called for in the natural course of individual exertion,—nor to be supported by individual care and profit,—it will at once be expensive in itself, and will interfere with the natural market of labour. Every stocking knitted, or yard of cotton or woollen cloth woven, within the walls of a prison, must in so far displace a knitter or weaver without; or throw such a glut of the article on the market as to abridge the wages of all. An instance of this is mentioned by Mr Buxton himself, in the establishment in Newgate, of a manufacture of stockings for convicts, which superseded a tradesman out of doors, who used to supply them. Such undertakings, moreover, are almost always carried on at a loss; and an attempt to introduce them into every jail in the kingdom,—often on a trifling scale,—with the additional accommodation,

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assistants, and taskmasters required,—would lead to a heavy expense. This expense, it is further to be observed, is a direct bounty given to the prison manufacture, over the same manufacture carried on without. It therefore drives the latter from the market, not merely by fair competition,—which is useless;—but by a public bounty given to keep up a losing trade,—which is hurtful.

*Secondly*, If the picture given by Mr Buxton, of the inside of a jail, be true, what is the amount of punishment to a guilty prisoner, or the terror of a similar fate to the honest artisan who is free? Suppose one of the latter class admitted to witness the scene already described, how would he reason?—"Here are people, all guilty of crimes, who are well fed, well clothed, well lodged,—in a cheerful society,—supplied with constant but easy work,—free from anxiety or care. While I, who never broke the laws, am worked harder,—with the occasional fear of being thrown idle,—worse clothed, fed, and housed. No doubt they are *confined:* but truly that is a word of little terror to me, who sit twelve hours a-day at my loom, under the pressure of a starving family. If this be the worst that can come of it,—besides the chance of escape,—why should I not try to help myself, as they have done?"

To this it must be added, that the jails of Ghent and Philadelphia are meant for the reception of many prisoners confined for life;—a punishment which is not inflicted in this country,—but which both requires and admits of a more steady and permanent system of employment.

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These views I suggest, rather as matter of doubt than conviction. They are at least worthy of consideration, and are given with the purpose of moderating an indiscreet zeal,—not of discouraging a cautious and practicable improvement. The great problem certainly is to render prisons such, that means of reformation may be pursued towards those within, while proper terrors are kept up for those without. But it unluckily so happens, that, as you improve the accommodations for amendment, you diminish the terror as a punishment. I cannot help thinking, however, as already said, that the work performed in a prison should be increased in amount,—rendered disagreeable in form,—and enforced with severity,—beyond what takes place among free artizans.

So far as regards amendment, the great objects of interest are doubtless the young and uncorrupted. That they may be sometimes tempted to crime, or involved with the guilty, is unquestionable; and for the reclaiming of such souls from the wreck, every reasonable exertion should be tried.

This subject brings to my remembrance an incident which occurred many years ago, but which made too deep an impression ever to be effaced. Happening to be in London, I went with a friend to visit Newgate. There is something in the entrance to a prison appalling to the unaccustomed eye and ear. The strong walls;—the massive gates;—the narrow arched passages;—the barred windows;—the key harshly grating in the wards as you enter each door;—and still more harshly, as it locks you in, after ha-

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ving entered:—all these things combine in one sad impression, that you are leaving Hope behind, and bidding farewell to the genial sun, to mankind, and liberty.

It chanced that on the day we had chosen for our visit there was a muster of convicts destined for transportation, which was to take place in a few days. It was a scene worthy of the pencil of Hogarth. The prisoners, male and female, were assembled in an inner paved court. In one place stood clerks busied in noting down their name, appearance, and other marks of identification; elsewhere were tailors fitting on their coarse grey clothing; or turnkeys, with large scissors, cutting off their hair. The various expression of their feelings baffles all description:—In some levity,—in others sullenness,—in others despondency, shame, or terror. Singing, laughing, shouting, blaspheming, sobbing;—every change of clamour, discord, or distempered passion;—mingled with the clanking of chains in this complicated din. There sat an old man, with a hard obdurate visage, getting his grisly locks polled under the sheers. Here two wretches, spread on the pavement, gambled for their cast rags with bits of straw. On the other side, a miserable woman, half maudlin, seated on the ground, reclined her head against the rough wall, chanting snatches of songs,—while her infant lay asleep at her breast.

But a new figure drew my attention. It was a youth about nineteen, who stood apart from the rest. His clothes were worn and dirty, but seemed to have been once of a better sort; and his whole air

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had a look of gentility unlike that of his savage associates. His face, though forlorn and squalid, was marked with traits of delicacy. His hat had fallen off, showing his light brown hair, which shaded his brow in natural curls. He stood in a gently stooping posture; his hands, which were loosely chained, hanging down before him clasped together. His eyes were fixed on the ground, in a rueful and absent gaze, as if his soul were absorbed in bitter contemplations far from the scene around him. As the cold breeze stirred his hair, an aguish shivering by fits came over him. Large tears stole from under his eyelids, and slowly and singly followed one another down his cheek. I was touched with his appearance; and going up to him, asked his name, with some expressions of pity. The voice of sympathy had long been a stranger to his ear. He looked up;—a struggle of emotions worked in his face;—and he burst into a passion of tears, which he vainly strove to wipe away with his fettered hands. When he had a little recovered himself, he said, in a voice broken by sobs,—"Oh, sir! I am the most wretched of human creatures:—Little did I once think of being here:—I "have been foolish,—very foolish,—imprudent,—undutiful:—But I am innocent of what I now suffer "for:——Oh! if you have any pity:—If something "could yet be done:—It would save my poor mother's "life."——Here his tears redoubled; and he could not go on. I took him aside to the further part of the court;—desired him to compose himself;—and promised, if he could mention any ground for interfering,

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that I would do my best to befriend him. He told me that his name was *Abel Greene*:—That his father had been a schoolmaster in Worcestershire, and had given him a good education, with a view of succeeding to the school; but had died before he was of sufficient age. That he had afterwards lived dutifully, for several years, with his mother, being an only child; but was at length seduced into idle courses by some youths of his own age, who had persuaded him to accompany them to London. That they had gone on from bad to worse, against his will; and when detected in some thefts, had turned king's evidence, and sworn falsely against him,—which led to his sentence of transportation. That his poor mother had come up to London on foot to see him; but was soon afterwards taken so ill, that she was confined to bed:—"And I am sure," said he, sobbing with renewed bitterness, "her death will be on my head."

I learned that some days were yet to elapse before the convicts were sent off. On speaking to the head jailor, he confirmed the outlines of the young man's story; and on further inquiry it was found to be true. The friend who accompanied me, and myself, rested neither night nor day in our labour of humanity. As our story became known, numbers pressed to assist us. We traced out the lads who had given evidence against him. They were detected in prevarication,—contradicted each other,—and at last owned their perjury. The Judge and Jury who had tried the case were satisfied that there had been an error, and seconded our application for mercy. It succeeded. And

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I had the delight of restoring the youth to the arms of his mother, whose agony of joy was too big for either words or tears.

My efforts did not stop here. By proper recommendations the young man was appointed to his father's school. And several years afterwards, when travelling in the west of England, I went a few miles out of my way, to pass through his village. I found him married;—the father of a family;—with a flourishing school;—and his good old mother enjoying, in the quiet evening of her days, a compensation for all she had once suffered.

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## LII. REFLECTIONS ON MODERN ASTRONOMY.

Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musæ,
Quarum sacra fero, ingenti perculsus amore,
Accipiant, coelique vias, et sidera monstrent;
Defectus Solis varios; Lunæque labores;
Unde tremor terris; quâ vi maria alta tumescant,
Objicibus ruptis, rursusque in se ipsa residant;
Quid tantum Oceano properent se tinguere soles
Hiberni, vel quæ tardis mora noctibus obstet.

VIRG.

DURING the last great and almost total eclipse of the sun (which happened, I think, so long ago as the 7th of September 1820), I called on a friend in this city, who is an expert practical observer of the heavens. No entire obscuration of the solar lumin-

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ary had occurred since the 1st of April 1764: and none other is, it seems, to take place, till the 9th of October 1847. The former of these events was rather before my days of observation; and it is little to be expected, or perhaps desired, that I should live to see the latter. At the same time, I think it proper to warn all whom it may concern, that in case the *Cabinet* be then going on with that bloom and flourish of reputation which it now enjoys, I will not fail to take a suitable notice of the phenomenon. In the mean time, we may turn our regards to what is more within our reach.

It may be in the recollection of those who take an interest in such events, that, here in Edinburgh, this important movement of the heavenly bodies, in the year 1820, passed invisible to our eyes: for clouds so dense involved the two mighty luminaries, during the whole period of their conjunction, that not a vestige of either could be seen. This loss was, I believe, supplied by observations made in happier climes: but nothing enabled us here even to conjecture the existence of the phenomenon, except a certain increase of darkness towards the middle of the eclipse; which, after all, did not exceed what often happens from the effect of clouds alone.

This disappointment I endured with more composure than the philosophical friend above mentioned, on whom I had called, to profit by his assistance in observing. His instruments were set out in due order; with a series of smoked glasses, in every shade and variety of obfuscation. But all was in vain. He

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paced the room impatiently backwards and forwards;—enumerated all the preparations he had made;—and all the curious points which he had expected to determine by the observation:—now rubbed his instruments;—now trimmed his glasses;—now threw a look towards the heavens, as lowering as their own;—with occasional gibes at our insular fog; and resolutions to settle for life in Italy or Egypt. Nothing, however, made the least impression on the obdurate Celestials, who persisted in their retirement till all was over; and then, to complete the provocation, the sun broke out in full splendour. At this my friend lost all patience; and began an attack on that great luminary, and his virgin sister, in terms so vituperative and calumnious, that I was obliged to interpose in behalf of good manners. For my own part, as the reflections on this phenomenon which chiefly excite my regard, are rather moral than mathematical, I can pursue them with equal advantage whether the sky be clear or cloudy.

The passage which I have prefixed to this paper from the most pure and elegant poet of antiquity, raises within us an excusable triumph, when we reflect on the mighty achievements of modern science. Virgil could only describe the great phenomena of nature, to lament his ignorance of their causes, and to express his eager thirst to know them. He beseeches his celestial patronesses the Muses, by all his devotion at their shrine, to admit him to their councils, and instruct him in the mysteries of nature:—to show him the paths of the planets,—the orbits of the sun and moon,—the

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secret of tides and earthquakes,—and of the unequal length of day and night throughout the different seasons. With the laws of all those stupendous phenomena (except perhaps the origin of earthquakes), we are now acquainted, not merely by probable conjecture, but with a certainty which leaves all other knowledge behind. The very completeness of discovery has tended to diminish our wonder at the advancement we have gained. Such is the perfection at which astronomy has arrived,—and so familiar are its rules of calculation,—that we find their result in every geographical school-book, and common almanack. And those truths which formed the object of hopeless wonder and inquiry to the master spirits of antiquity, are become the everyday knowledge of the vulgar, and instilled with the rudiments of infant education.

Nothing certainly is calculated to give us a more exalted idea of the capacities of the human soul, than the wonders it has achieved in astronomical science. At first view, it might be thought that, of all the objects of our knowledge or investigation, the one most hopeless of attainment, was the determining the distances of the heavenly bodies, the laws which regulate their motions, and their influence on this our planet. Placed at a distance so far beyond the reach of all our senses but that of sight;—subjected even to this sense by such imperfect and interrupted observation;—so confusing by their number;—so changeable in their phases;—so unfelt in their influences on this globe;—it might well have been thought, that, of all the sciences, this was the last which would attain

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perfection, or even any considerable improvement. Yet it has approached far nearer to perfection than any other. In it, more is known as to its general principles, and fewer particular phenomena remain unexplained, than in any other branch of human knowledge.

And this perfection of discovery (it is most important to remark), has led to the knowledge of a corresponding perfection in the system discovered. Few things are more interesting than the history of science; the tracing of its progress, from the first accidental or feeble efforts, through gradual advances,—unexpected difficulties,—tentative conjectures,—and occasional errors,—till it arrives at the maturity of perfect science. But of no branch of human knowledge is the progress so striking as that of Astronomy. From the first early observations of the Chaldean and Egyptian shepherds, and the partial lights struck out by a Thales, a Pythagoras, or a Ptolemy,—we behold it gradually advancing, by the investigations of Kepler, Galileo, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, and other illustrious men, in whose hands it assumed the form of strict science;—till at length the full radiance of the Newtonian mind was thrown upon it, and it stood confessed in all the harmony and regularity of a matured system. Still, however, some small anomalies remained;—some few movements were irreconcilable with the simple law unfolded by Newton; and seemed, in their continuance, to threaten disturbance and disorder to the system. These have now, by the discoveries of the later continental philosophers,—of Eu-

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ler, of D'Alembert, of La Grange, of La Place,—been, one by one, explained and reconciled. Those great men have shown that all apparent irregularities disappear on further inquiry, or are balanced by compensations and adjustments, in such a way, as to bring the whole planetary movements within one simple and uniform law: and the system now exhibits, even to our limited faculties, a simplicity and perfection suitable to the greatest work of creation.

The perfection of any created work leads, by just reasoning, to infer the perfection of its Creator. Dr Paley, in his Treatise on Natural Theology, expresses his doubts whether the wonders of the planetary system, however sublime, lead to the conclusion of an intelligent creating Mind, so strongly as some others of the phenomena of nature;—particularly the marks of mechanical contrivance in the human frame, and in that of other organized bodies. "My opinion of "astronomy," says he, "has always been, that it is "not the best medium through which to prove the "agency of an intelligent Creator. But that, this "being proved, it shows, beyond all other sciences, "the magnificence of his operations." We have not, he conceives, the same opportunity of judging of the adaptation of means to an end, in this science, as in those more under our experiment and observation. I cannot help thinking, however, that this acute philosopher has here underrated the argument to be drawn from astronomy. The end in view,—the problem to be solved,—we may assume to have been, to

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impress such motions, in respect of direction and velocity, on a multitude of great bodies distributed through space, as should carry them on, for an indefinite length of time,—in the neighbourhood of each other,—and influencing each other,—without mutual interruption or disturbance. Combined with this, we have reason to believe, is the fulfilment of many purposes towards the support and enjoyment of myriads of sentient beings inhabiting those worlds; but as this is not capable of such clear proof, I confine myself to the mere arrangement of their motions, in relation to each other, with a view to their harmonious working. Now the problem just stated, if presented to any finite mind, would appear to be of a difficulty quite insuperable;—not to speak of the power required to put and keep the law in operation, after it was discovered. Yet this problem has been solved in the planetary motions, by means of a single principle,—that of *Attraction*;—acting according to a peculiar law,—that is, inversely as the squares of the distances of the objects. The late discoveries of the continental astronomers, as already said, have shewn that every apparent anomaly in the celestial movements is so curiously compensated, as to return, within a given period, under the general law. They have shewn that any other law of motion,—or the same law operating by any other intensity,—would have led to some disorder in the system. Now all this does seem as strongly to indicate intelligent design working to an end,—to be as little referable to blind chance,—as those mechanical contrivances



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founded on by Dr Paley:—with this difference,—that the contrivance here is on a scale infinitely more stupendous in wisdom and power.

The magnificence of the celestial phenomena, indeed, casts into the shade all other objects of human contemplation. This was so strongly felt in the infancy of science, that the powers of Reason were too slow and feeble to account for the movements of these luminaries, and Imagination was called in to aid. Their path was supposed to be directed by Deities, and strains of immortal harmony attended their course. And even yet, amidst the explanations of exact science, while, in the silent night, we behold those mighty flames absolving their appointed course;—wheeling in calm and steady majesty through the pathless deep;—preserving, amidst constant change, the most harmonious unity of movement;—we can almost enter into the lofty abstractions of Pythagoras;—can think that we behold a Genius in every planet,—and fancy that we listen to the music of the Spheres.

It may, however, be conceded to Dr Paley, that the wonders of astronomy afford at least as signal and important a proof of the perfection of the Deity, as they do of his existence. His existence may be proved from other sources,—but from none can be drawn so sublime an evidence of his wisdom and power. This is not merely from the immensity of the effort, but from the simplicity of the means, and the perfection of the result. Exquisite as may be the mechanical structure of animal and vegetable

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life ;—curious and beautiful as are many of the contrivances in other parts of nature ;—still it cannot be denied that, in almost every arrangement here below, the purposes of wise and benevolent design are so often disturbed and counteracted by disease, imperfection, or other indication of evil,—that it would be difficult, from such instances alone, to infer the attributes of perfect goodness, wisdom, and power. But, in the arrangement of the planetary system, we have one instance of absolute perfection,—of unmixed good,—of unerring wisdom,—of unimpeded power ;—and it is fortunately that instance where the object is the most vast, and the effort the greatest. The existence of evil in this world will probably remain a difficulty for ever inscrutable to man. But the divine Author of nature may have permitted us to contemplate one instance of perfection ; partly to assure us of his own, notwithstanding the apparent defects in other branches of his creation ; and partly to encourage our inquiries into his works, by shewing that the appearance of imperfection vanishes in proportion as they are better known.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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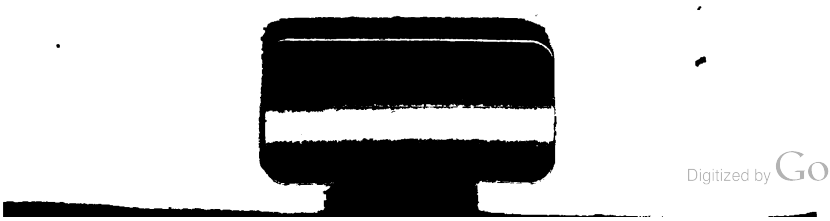

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